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This journal focuses on the teaching and learning of French. Selected titles in this volume include the following: "Practical Ideas for Teaching Reluctant Learners in Key Stage 4"; "Learning to Count in French"; "Oh No! The Target Language . . . !" "French and the English 'Invasion'"; "The Sounds of Formal French"; "La Symphonie Pastorale, The Pastor's Diary. What Examiners Want to Know"; "The New Contract for School in France: An English Perspective"; "Professional Education for Europe"; "Directions 2000: CD-ROM for French Learners"; "Satellite Television for Language Learning"; "Informal French, But Just How Informal"; "Parlez Vous Franglais Or Do You Speak Frenglish?" "La Villette: City of Science and Industry"; "New Images, New Culture?" "Teaching Grammar"; "Le Pouvoir et la Vie of the Metamorphosis of Valery Giscard D'Estaing"; "When Prevert Draws the Portrait of a Bird"; "Mistral, Giono and Pagnol as Exponents of Provence"; "Jean de Florette in the French Classroom"; "Communications Strategy and Cultural Tourism: The Case of Fontvielle (B-Du-R)"; "Across the Boards at A Level in France"; "A New Look at Some Old Friends: Truc, Quand Meme, and Justement"; "Une Femme Professeur, une Professeur, une Professeur(e) or une Prof?"; "The Right Tool for the Job"; "Contemporary French Songs and the Representation of Death"; "The BBC French Experience 1996"; "How to Use a Defective Case to Develop the Oral Expression Abilities of Our Students"; "The Yorkshire-Lille Exchange--A New ALL Development"; "Developing the International Dimension for Pupils with Special Educational Needs"; "FIPF In Tokyo"; "Charles de Gaulle, Metaphoric Navigator"; "Video Ergo Sum: A Learning Package from French Satellite TV." (KFT)

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ASSOCIATION for
LANGUAGE
LEARNING

FRANCOPHONIE

The French Journal of the Association for Language Learning

Reluctant learners in Key Stage 4

French and the English Invasion

and over 20 book reviews

DECEMBER 1994
No 10

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Practical ideas for teaching reluctant learners in Key Stage 4

Kate Corney Language Teaching Centre,
University of York

Introduction

All teachers can easily bring to mind an image of the reluctant learner. And when we do so we can immediately put names to them. We recognise all their characteristics. They are students who would not have continued with French a few years ago, students whom we would quite probably have been pleased to pass onto another curriculum area in Y10. Nowadays, however, we cannot do that and it is for this reason that we must find strategies to remotivate these students at the start of their two year exam course.

We have tried and tested many techniques and found that some worked and some did not. In my 20 years in the classroom I seemed to specialise in reluctant learners and in my four years as an Inspector/Adviser I met them in every school. I have taught and observed lessons where these students seemed to understand little of what was happening. When asked during an inspection how they feel they are getting on in French, they may well answer: 'I'm rubbish at it' or 'I can't understand a word, it's all in French'!

So, what strategies can we adopt to make our reluctant learners less reluctant and also potentially less of an embarrassment during an inspection? Let us look firstly at the main problem that we are faced with when they enter Y10 after three years of studying French. The problem is simple. They are unmotivated. They do not want to do French because they have lost confidence in their ability. They feel that they know and understand very little French. They start Y10 feeling frustrated and inadequate. The problem is aggravated by the long holiday when all students forget much that they have learnt.

A fresh start in Y10

The first lessons in Y10 are therefore crucial to regain students' confidence and show them that in fact they know much more than they think. We can help students starting Y10 work with dialogues which contain cognates. e.g.

'(i) **A: C'est bien le bus pour Cannes?**
B: Non, c'est le bus pour Antibes. Le bus pour Cannes est là-bas. C'est le numéro six.

(ii) **A: Ce T-shirt, s'il vous plaît.**
B: Cent francs, s'il vous plaît.

(iii) **A: Le film commence à quelle heure?**
B: A six heures.'

It helps if these dialogues can be supported by photos. We should tell our students to look at the photos and to look in the dialogues for words which look like English words. We will have to remind them that they do not need to know the exact meaning of each word to understand what the dialogues are about. When students have worked on these dialogues, we can present them with other similar dialogues.

(iv) **A: Vous avez de la place pour une tente?**

B: Pour combien de nuits?

A: Pour deux nuits?

B: Oui, madame.

(v) **A: Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire?**

B: J'aime jouer au rugby.

A: Au rugby! Moi, je déteste le rugby.

Again, we can tell them to look at the visuals to help support comprehension and to look for words which are similar to English words. By this stage students should be able to understand most of the dialogues. We are then in a position where we are able to praise our students and to remind them that they really do know a lot of French. This will increase their confidence and, in learning to look at the dialogues in the ways suggested, they will also have acquired valuable comprehension skills. Once we have done this we will be in a better position to motivate them through their success.

The Key to success

This is, however, only the starting point. What really motivates these students? We have tried many strategies and worked very hard to find the key to motivation. We have tried to be innovative, to adopt new teaching styles, but in the end, whatever the methods we choose, there is, I believe, only one real motivator, and that is exam success. All our students need and want exam success. Peer pressure sometimes makes them slow to admit this, but even the most reluctant students will want to feel that they can achieve something worthwhile in the exam. This key to motivation may sound banal, but it is true. We have only to look back to the introduction of Graded Objectives to realise how much the certificates which heralded success motivated our reluctant Key Stage 3 learners.

Nothing succeeds like success and we hold the key to the secret garden of exam success. We must let our students know this. We must increase their confidence in us as teachers and teach them to believe that they can succeed, if they stick with us.

So, how do we let them understand and believe that we will give them success in exams? Firstly, we plan very carefully and we share this planning with our students in the following ways.

1. *Content*

We need to look carefully at what we teach our students. We need to look very carefully at our exam syllabuses and teach our students only that which they need for the exam. Most course books teach much more than this. We must therefore be selective in the language we choose to teach. We ought also to adopt this minimalist approach in the teaching of grammar.

When we teach perfect tense, we should try to reduce the verbs taught to those which the students need for communicative purposes. We should also try and restrict our choice of verbs to those which follow a similar pattern. Is it really necessary for example to teach students to produce the perfect tense of *aller* when they can express the same idea with the perfect tense of *être*? When students learn how to talk about what they did in the holidays (a popular exam topic) they can achieve their objective with just four verbs e.g.

J'ai passé mes vacances
- à Londres
- en Espagne
- en Italie
- à Paris

J'ai joué
- au tennis
- au volleyball
- au basket
- au ping-pong
- au football

J'ai visité
- Paris
- des musées
- des châteaux

J'ai été
- chez moi
- à la discothèque
- dans des cafés
- au ping-pong
- à la plage

It is far better for students to understand and use a little language really well than to learn inadequately lots of language.

If there are several linguistic ways to complete a task, students should be encouraged to use whichever they find easiest.

'Il y a d'autres formes de questions pour demander les directions.
On peut dire:
Le port, s'il vous plaît?
On entend aussi:

Pour aller au port, s'il vous plaît?
Où est le port, s'il vous plaît?'

2. *Management of Learning*

Learning must be business-like and students should be encouraged towards some autonomy in the management of their own learning. Work on each topic should start with clear objectives,

e.g. In a unit dealing with travel by train, the language content can be broken into four objectives.

e.g.

'1 **demander l'heure de départ et l'heure d'arrivée des trains.**
2 **acheter un billet.**
3 **comprendre les annonces.**
4 **comprendre les panneaux.'**

The language of the topics should then be presented in easily manageable chunks according to the objectives.

Finally, the language of the unit should be summarised under the objective headings, so that students can evaluate their achievement against each objective. In this way they will experience greater success than they would if the unit were globally assessed.

e.g.

'Voici le sommaire

Objectif 1 – *L'heure de départ et d'arrivée*

Le train pour Nice part à quelle heure?	**What time does the train leave for Nice?**
Il arrive à quelle heure?	**What time does it arrive?**
A vingt heures trente.	**At 20.30.**

Objectif 2 – *Acheter des billets*

Un aller simple pour Nice, s'il vous plaît.	**A single ticket for Nice, please.**
Un aller-retour.	**A return ticket.**
C'est combien?	**How much is it?'**

3. *Time Management*

Some students find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time on the same type of activity. It is therefore most important for us to change activities frequently. This applies particularly to listening activities. As listening activities are often used as an aid to initial learning of the language, they can be reinforced and complemented by writing activities. Copy-writing is a particularly good activity to reinforce the learning of new language.

e.g.

'Apprenez les phrases
Recopiez
a les activités pour les jeunes.
b les activités pour les personnes âgées.
Ecoutez
Vous avez bien choisi les activités pour les jeunes et pour les personnes âgées?'

4. *The Steps of Learning*

To allow students to acquire the new language and to feel confident in their use of it, we should share with them the process by which we are helping them to learn.

(i) *Recognition*

Students listen to the new language and understand it. We need to be sure that students have understood exactly what the language means before they try to use it. They need to understand it not only as a discrete item, but also when combined with other language in a longer passage.

(ii) *Repetition*

Students repeat the new language after a direct model. This does not need to be class repetition; it can be group, pair or individual repetition. To make the repetition more effective, we can link it to meaning. In this way the student concentrates not only on the sounds of the words, but also on what they mean. This reinforces the learning process.

e.g.

'Répétez
(a) les phrases qui décrivent un bon climat.
(b) les phrases qui décrivent un mauvais climat.'

At this stage repetition is always after a model and the new language is only in the short-term memory.

Reproduction

Students reproduce the new language without a direct model. All too often we have asked students to produce new language before they have practised it adequately. This has often resulted in failure and a decrease in motivation.

Grammar

Students cannot be expected to produce their own utterances if they have not been taught the pattern of the language. Grammar should be simple and students should be encouraged to deduce a pattern and rule which we as teachers then formalise.

e.g.

' **Regardez**

Quand on parle du temps passé, on utilise deux parties du verbe.

A J'ai visité des musées.
B J'ai passé mes vacances.
C J'ai été à la plage.

Voice les deux parties:

J'ai	**visité**
J'ai	**passé**
J'ai	**joué**
J'ai	**été**

Il est important d'utiliser les *deux* parties. Comme cela, on vous comprend bien.'

Manipulation

Only after students have understood the pattern of the language, can they produce sentences of their own, based on the model they have learnt.

5. *Exam Preparation*

Students should be given specific advice on how to prepare for and succeed in exams. Again, as the keeper of this knowledge, we will be able to increase students' confidence in us, as teachers. When we play recordings, we should teach students techniques for how to listen. When we tell them to produce dialogues, we should give them practical advice on how to gain marks in exams

e.g.

(i) **'Try to say as much as possible in the exam. If you are asked: "Avez-vous des frères et des sœurs?" don't just say "Oui", carry on talking and describe them. If you have no brothers or sisters, but you have a dog say, "Je suis fille/fils unique, mais j'ai un chien." '**

(ii) *Speaking*

*Remember in all speaking tasks to *read the question carefully and complete all the tasks.*

*Try not to hesitate too much and try to sound confident.

*In the conversation try to:

'1. **Pronounce the French as well as you can.**
2. **Keep the conversation going without too many pauses.**
3. **Answer with detailed answers, not just 'oui' and 'non'.**
4. **Try to *show off* what you know. If you can talk about the past, then show the examiner these clever things, e.g. J'ai passé mes vacances en Espagne. Je suis allé(e) à la plage.'**

We can build on the comprehension skills which they acquired when working on the initial dialogues at the start of Y10 to help them to cope with reading passages of a variety of lengths. We can give them practical ideas on how to substitute words in model written texts for their exam.

6. *Revision*

We should start revision with our students as early as we can. If we assess students every half-term and attach to that assessment a certificate, they will need to revise on a regular basis. We should explain to them that they cannot cram for a language exam. We can liken this to preparing for a music exam or for a sports event. They cannot hope to succeed in a football match, if they only practise once before the match and do no other practice all year. Above all, we must teach our students how to revise and how to learn.

e.g.

(i)

'1. **Copy out all the phrases you find difficult. Look at them for 5 minutes.**
2. **Copy them again, but miss out the first and last words. Close your books. Write out the full sentence.**

(ii)

'1. **Cover the English phrases. Copy the**

French phrases in categories, e.g. Questions and Answers. Write the English for each French phrase without looking at your books.

2. **Copy the French phrases in a different order. Close your book. Write the English for each French phrase.**
3. **Look at the French and English phrases for 5 minutes. Try to take a photo in your mind of each phrase. Copy the first and last words of each French phrase. Close your books. Try to write the whole French phrase, plus the English translation.'**

It is important for students to have the opportunity to revise their language not only through these strategies, but also by working with a recording of the language. Poor pronunciation is a major hindrance to communication. Students quickly lose the accuracy in pronunciation when working from the written word alone. Students should also be given advice on how to use this recording

e.g.

'3. Repeat each phrase
(a) after the recording
(b) at the same time as the recording
(c) with your book closed.
4. If you have problems with any of the key phrases, try putting them to a rhythm. This will help you to learn.'

All the techniques so far will help students in a clear and practical way to achieve exam success. It is, however, important that we constantly refer to these techniques and explain to students the reasons for doing these activities.

They need to feel confident that we do not simply select activities at whim, but that we, their teachers, have taken the trouble to plan their learning in such a way as to make life as simple as possible for them, whilst doing our best to guarantee their success.

There are, of course, many other things we can do. We can motivate through Drama. We can use the OHP to great effect by involving students in its use to reinforce the learning of new language,

e.g.

'Place on the OHP the key phrase: "Le week-end dernier". Add to the phrase a silhouette to show one of the possible activities which students did last weekend. Students make a phrase based on the visual. The student to build a correct phrase places another silhouette on as a stimulus for a second phrase.'

One thing we can address further is the setting for our students' learning of French. We can benefit greatly from treating our students as young adults. With this in mind we can link our content to a vocational context and thereby give our tudents basic skills, e.g. using the telephone, preparing for an interview. We can look, too, at the setting we choose in France. The south of France, with its blue skies, beaches and palm trees must surely be more attractive than some of the more Northern parts of the country.

Conclusion

The main motivator, however, will always be directly linked to a student's confidence to succeed. Our students' confidence stems from our confident presentation of language and learning techniques. All students need to succeed. All students thrive on praise. Success motivates and if we can give our students the confidence to believe that they can achieve exam success in French, we will have motivated them. After all, what could be more rewarding for us than to be the teachers responsible for enabling our reluctant learners to become willing participants on the road to exam success?

Kate Corney is a former inspector/adviser for modern languages. She is currently writing Vital, a course for reluctant learners at Key Stage 4 which is to be published by Collins Educational next spring.

This article is based upon a presentation at the annual conference of the Association of Modern Language teachers of Victoria, Australia.

Learning to count in French

Perry Swingler Woking

Although I am French by birth and upbringing, I was trained as a primary teacher in England, I spent most of my early career teaching 5 to 7 year olds in UK State schools. Since then I have also taught French to teenagers and adults.

In recent years I have been lucky enough to find a school which wanted French taught from five years old, thus drawing on my infant teacher experience and French background to teach French to children during their first years at school.

This article describes one scheme of work which I have developed for that age group, which uses number as a platform for a range of learning activities.

Coping with Numbers can be one of the more difficult tasks facing the foreign language learner. Many adults whom I have met during my teaching career have admitted to being unable to check whether they had received the correct change from a foreign shopkeeper, and this probably helped trigger my decision to focus on teaching our very young children, future visitors to foreign lands, to cope with *number* – in other words, how to count in French, do simple sums and get to grips with the necessary vocabulary.

Memory plays an important part in learning a language, but as not all children are equally good at memorising, it is important to use as many ways as possible to teach the vocabulary associated with number. The need therefore is to offer children opportunities to learn which involve all the senses: seeing, hearing, touching, speaking and moving so that they can benefit from whichever approach suits them best. One of the easiest ways of offering such opportunity is by playing a 'game'.

Incidentally, I even occasionally use *taste* as well – by rewarding good work with a 'bonbon' when the class and I judge that children have worked specially hard! Naturally, I expect them to say 'Merci Madame' or 'Merci Peter' or 'Merci Sarah' . . . – Sarah and Peter are my helpers.

When developing a 'game', I often recall my Teacher Training days and the rule that any apparatus or teaching aid must serve several aims, and in this case they are to help children:

1. count for a purpose, winning the game being part of it,
2. to extend and use their vocabulary and practice useful phrases including 'please' and 'thank you',
3. share the experience of learning and playing,
4. respect and sometimes admire a neighbour's drawing and presentation,
5. help others and be willing to be helped when a number, a word or a phrase doesn't come readily to the child's mind,
6. enjoy repetitive work without getting board.

The following sections describe the materials required for a class of 20 and the 'mechanics' of the 'game'.

Materials

One game sheet or board per child, consisting of a pathway made up of 20, 30, 40, 50 or 60 squares or boxes, as shown in the examples in Figs. 1 and 2 – readily photocopiable (A4).

Versions may include children's drawings, pictures relating to a particular theme such as la famille, les animaux de la ferme; les magasins, le marché – les jours de la semaine, l'heure, les mois de l'année, les vêtements, le petit déjeuner, l'école, les

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cadeaux de Noël, and so on. After a few weeks experience many children like to design their own 'game' sheet.

20 counters – four of each colour – blue, white, red, yellow, green.

10 dice – two of each colour – blue, white, red, yellow, green.

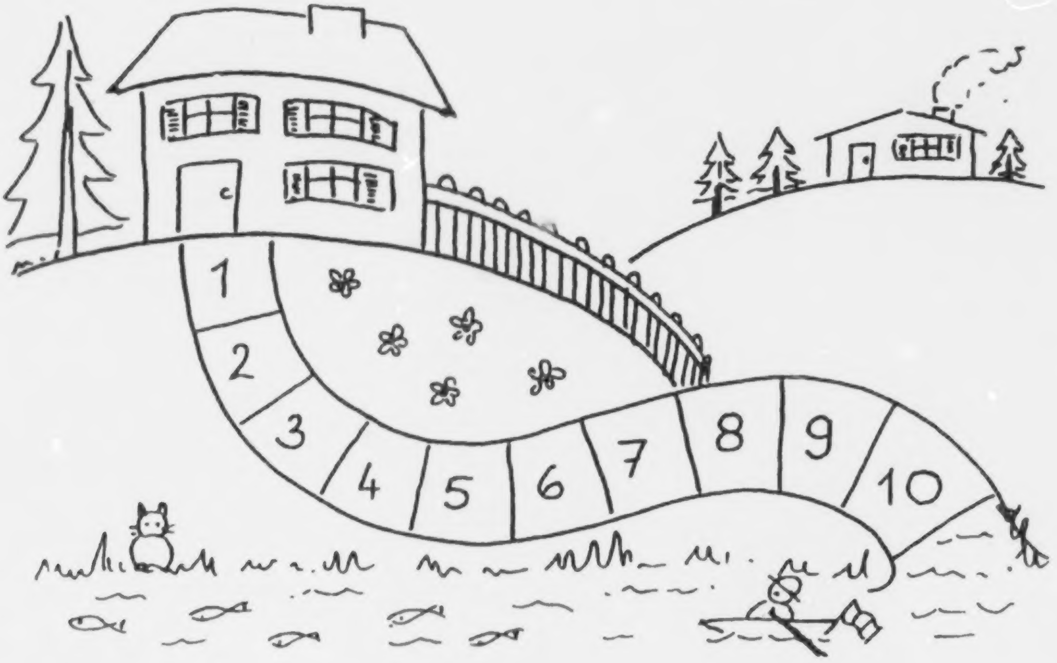

Fig. 1

Mechanics

First, each child is given a game sheet according to his or her level of ability to count. Complete beginners get a very simple sheet covering the numbers 1 to 10 such as that shown in Fig. 1, and so that they 'own' it, may be given time to add their own drawings of people or animals, or other simple objects. Older or more advanced children will be given a sheet that includes numbers up to 20, 40 or 60, such as that illustrated in Fig. 2 and related to a theme.

Children sit in pairs and play each other's 'games' in turn, thus reinforcing their understanding and skill without feeling they are repeating exactly the same exercise.

The game beings with some conversational exchanges, for example:

Player A – 'Bonjour' – Player B –'Bonjour'
Player A – shuffles the counters behind his/her back and asks 'Quelle main veux-tu'?
Player B – choose a hand and says 'Celle-ci', taking the counter and says 'Merci'.

All 'games' follow the same procedure and rules as 'Ludo':

Every time a child throws the dice, he or she calls out the number thrown (e.g. quatre) and move the counter the required number of spaces by counting in French. That child then gives the dice to the partner and says 'C'est ton tour'. The partner replies 'Merci' and the game continues. After each throw of the dice the child says the number in French before moving the counter.

When a counter lands by a picture, the partner asks 'Qui-est-ce?' or in the example in Fig. 2. 'Qu'est-ce que tu veux?' The other player must reply in the context of that particular 'game', using phrases he or she knows, for example: 'C'est un œuf sur le plat', or

'C'est le fromage'

The player who arrives at the end of the path first, announces 'J'ai fini'.

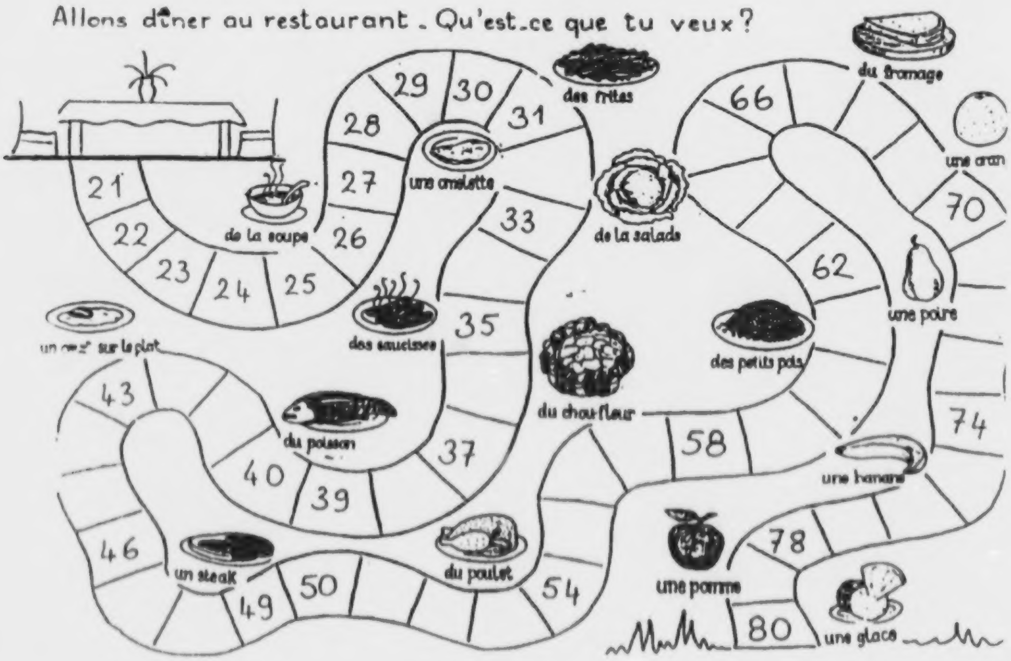
Allons dîner au restaurant. Qu'est-ce que tu veux?
du fromage
des frites
une oran
une omelette
de la soupe
de la salade
une poire
des saucisses
des petits pois
sur le plat
du poisson
du chou-fleur
une banane
un steak
du poulet
une pomme
une glace
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Fig. 2

The game must be played in the language and continuously monitored so that the teacher can keep a record of each child's progress and achievement.

If time allows, the children play a second game with the second sheet.

When the game has been sufficiently exploited, the child takes his/her game home and is encouraged to continue playing it with the family or a friend.

Preparatory work

To introduce a 'game' and ensure that it achieves its purpose, some preparatory work with the class is of course required.

A good way to start is by everyone counting together the numbers along a pathway. Thereafter, depending on the particular 'game', one can ask:

'Où sont les saucisses?' and the child has to answer correctly 'au numéro trente cinq'

Alternatively, the teacher can ask: 'Qu'y-at-il au numéro cinquante quatre?' and the answer would be 'C'est un poulet'. This can lead to questions such as 'Aimes-tu le poulet?' and so on.

Another example (from another game sheet): 'Où va-t-on acheter du pain?' – 'Au numéro vingt deux' which can also extend use beyond counting by asking 'Comment s'appelle ce magasin?' – 'La boulangerie' – 'Qu'est-ce qu'on achète á la boulangerie?' . . .

Teacher questions can be as simple or as elaborate as the childrens' levels of ability and understanding and the children themselves should be encouraged to ask questions too.

This question and answer preparatory work using pictures is a quite conventional teaching activity. Playing the 'game' however, is what makes the difference. The 'game' not only provides children with an opportunity to practise what they have learnt in the preparatory period but engenders the feeling that they are really speaking French on their own, and are enjoying doing so. In other words, learning a foreign language isn't a hard grind, but fun and natural.

Learning a foreign language can be

likened to learning to play an instrument: the sooner you start having lessons and the more practice you have, the easier it becomes and, as we all know, variety of method greatly facilitates the process of learning. By starting young there is more time for variety, fun, songs and games such as I have described in this article.

It will be clear that this kind of 'game' can be played in any language and developed for use with children with special needs, older primary school pupils and even first year secondary pupils. Likewise, more elaborate game sheets can be invented to suit a variety of purposes. I hope that sharing my experience of this scheme of work may be of some value to colleagues teaching foreign languages to the young.

EDITOR'S NOTE
Call for articles

PAGNOL and GIONO Centenary

It will not have escaped the notice of lovers of the writings of Marcel Pagnol that 1995 marks the centenary of his birth. It is also the centenary of the birth of the other great Provençal writer who inspired Pagnol – Jean Giono. Issue No 12 of *Francophonie* will attempt to commemorate the centenary of these two great writers and we are therefore putting out a call for contributions on any interesting aspect of their work. Contributions need not be limited to purely literary studies, though these will be very welcome. We are also very keen to include pedagogical/methodological notes on how their various works have been treated in class. We shall particularly welcome articles (long or short) on work done in class which has generated active student participation. Work by students could well be an interesting facet of this feature. Articles on the films and on the use made of the films in class might be another interesting aspect. We shall also be happy to consider illustrative material – photographs or drawings which will illustrate the feature.

Anyone considering submitting long or short pieces on the subject, or on Provence in general, including the language and the culture, is asked to contact the Editor at Leeds Metropolitan University, Caedmon Hall, Beckett Park, Leeds LS6 3QS. Ideally material would need to be submitted by July 1995 at the latest.

Oh no! Not the target language . . . !

Ian Bauckham Kingsbury High School,
London

As a Modern Language teacher I am very aware of the unending stream of dogmas we have thrown at us from people who we assume know better than us. It wouldn't be so bad if these pronouncements remained constant over the years, but unfortunately Modern Language teaching has been subjected to the 'pendulum syndrome' – when we are trained as teachers one kind of wisdom prevails, but no sooner have we established ourselves in our professions and developed techniques for surviving the enormous day-to-day pressure of the classroom than we suddenly become aware that the following generation of entrants to the profession are whispering that we really are *so* outdated in our methods. Then the guilt sets in, we dread the arrival of the adviser or inspector. We want to bury our heads in the chalk-dust and be left to pursue our disgusting habits in peace and quiet.

Nowhere is this scenario more widespread than in the realm of target language use. (And this is NOT an article extolling the virtues of teaching in the target language, so do read on). The pendulum swings here have been truly enormous. Today the National Curriculum recommends us to use *mostly* the target language in the classroom. Newly qualified Modern Language teachers as well as our ambitious upwardly-mobile colleagues now look askance at anyone who confesses to talking to their French classes in English. Publishers and coursebook writers have caught on too: today there is no market for otherwise very well constructed courses with sensible selection, sequencing and grading of materials if they commit the unforgivable sin of printing their rubrics in English.

Countless Modern Language departments up and down the country have been beavering away producing lists of classroom instructions to give to teachers, so their pupils are 'introduced' to the same expressions – *asseyez-vous, sortez vos cahiers, puis-je ouvrir la fenêtre s'il vous plaît?* and so on. We have had countless talks and courses on how to teach entirely in the target language, and some of us have had the dubious pleasure of watching nauseating videos of paragon teachers delivering brilliant lessons entirely in the target language.

I sound very cynical. I promise you I'm not. I am a keen, dedicated, innovative and dare I say it, reasonably effective French teacher. But I am also reflective. I have encouraged my Modern Language Department in an inner-city comprehensive for the last three years to teach entirely in the target language and I have endeavoured to do it myself. I'm not a 'do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do' head of department. And I have come to some simple conclusions which you may read if you wish.

Firstly, those who say that the only reason it's hard to teach your average and below average students in Year 11 entirely in the target language just because they're not used to it are lying. Even when they *are* used to it, it's still hard. Secondly, I no longer listen to those who say it's perfectly possible to build up a relationship with all pupils including the disciplinary relationship *entirely* in the target language. I can't. Thirdly (and I promise you I'm not a grammar-basher) there are sometimes things I want to explain explicitly about the way a language works which *are* worth knowing but for which the students don't have the necessary metalanguage. And for the sake of a short explanation it wouldn't be effective use of time to teach them it either. And I think the smug axiom 'If you can't say it in French it can't be worth saying' is at best doubtful . . . And I don't feel guilty about admitting that the pressure of GCSE with its liberal use of English has a washback effect on my classroom teaching.

I have been led to ask myself what the theoretical foundation for teaching *entirely* in the target language in the British context is. It seems to rest, along with the fashion for random 'authenticity' at the expense of properly graded material, on the assumption that children learn a foreign language in the same way as they learn their mother tongue, in other words by random exposure to the language and their own hypothesising about meaning. I would argue that this is precisely how children do not learn foreign languages, particularly in the British context. Eric Hawkins, among others, has pointed out the differences.[1] Children learning their mother tongue have infinitely greater exposure to it, strong motivation to learn it as it facilitates communication with all their loved ones, and need to learn it as it provides the tools for thought. A child learns that an apple is different to other fruits, i.e. the concept 'apple', at the same time as he or she learns the English word 'apple'. In a later foreign language these factors do not pertain. The child can already communicate perfectly satisfactorily with their nearest and dearest. They already have an (English) system of classification and labelling, and, to boot, they have only minute exposure to this strange new language which they don't really understand the point of learning.

Conversely there are conditions which pertain for the foreign language which are not there for mother tongue learners. Teenagers can learn things consciously. They can learn new words without having to establish new meanings as they already have the network of meanings in their heads from their mother tongue. They have the presence of an expert in explaining abstract rules and principles and moreover they have an intellect already well enough developed to understand these.

It occurs to me that for these reasons learning a foreign language is much more akin to the process of learning to read than it is to the process of learning one's mother tongue. Reading is something which at first seems hard and pointless, which is at first very conscious and laboured, which has lots of things to learn off-by-heart, but which also seems to be rule-governed in some obvious way. And a child learning to read has on hand an expert in reading who will show definite strategies and correct mistakes in an openly didactic way. And as in foreign language learning fluency in reading comes after the rules have been learnt and much controlled practice has been undertaken. In one's mother tongue fluency comes first, before awareness of rules and principles.

And now to the crux of the matter: who would think of teaching a child to read purely by random exposure to written material without any selected, deliberately taught, input? And who would try to use *only* written language in the reading and writing lesson, thus depriving the child of any oral guidance and support?

We can go further. Many developmental psychologists now believe that the main advantage of learning to read is not its practical usefulness in later life (and think how great that is!) but the conscious awareness that learning to read brings to our spoken language, which gives us the ability to exercise greater control over our speech and gives us an abstract, free-from-context vision of language which makes so many forms of logical reasoning so much easier. Now if we teach a foreign language more like the way we teach reading in our own language, who is to say it couldn't bring the same advantages?

Would what Margaret Donaldson calls 'intellectual self-awareness and self-control'[2] not be a more convincing aim of foreign language learning than the somewhat lame justification that we teach 'for purposes of practical communication' when we all know full well that 95% of our pupils will never need to 'practically communicate' in any foreign language and even if they do it might not be in French!

Many of you will probably be thinking that I am advocating a return to Whitmarsh and thousands of grammatical rules explained in English to be applied to seminonsensical sentences in French. I am not. I am simply arguing for a less evangelical and dogmatic approach to the use of the target language. Of course our students need to see that you can use a foreign language as communication, and one way of showing that is by communicating with them in it in the classroom. But it is also vital that they *understand* how a language works and that we take advantage of the fact that they are already fluent speakers of a language, namely their own, and we don't treat them like language-less infants. Just as you wouldn't teach a five-year-old to read using Shakespeare, you would use something closer to the context of the learner, so too you shouldn't use completely decontextualised sentences from Whitmarsh to teach a foreign language. Instead we use something close to the situation of the learner. The use of meaningless language, out of context, is just as bad, in my view, as the indiscriminate use of inappropriate target language. Don't feel guilty when you judge that explanation or discussion in English is appropriate for a full and conscious understanding of the way a particular construction works or for the elucidation of a particular meaning. Let's have a bit more balance, moderation and common sense in Modern Language teaching and a bit less of the pendulum syndrome!

References

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2. Margaret Donaldson, *Children's Minds*, Fontana 1978, p. 97.

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French and the English 'invasion'

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In Luis Buñel's film *Le Fantôme de la Liberté* (1974), one of the characters complains to his wife that he has been sleeping badly. Her response begins what amounts to a brief discussion on linguistic borrowing:

- Tu devrais aller te faire faire un check-up . . .
- Mais pourquoi un *check-up* ? Il y a une expression en français qui signifie exactement la même chose: *examen général*.
- C'est trop long, *examen général*. *Check-up*, c'est beaucoup plus rapide.
- Mais rien ne te presse.

Given that one of Buñuel's recurring themes is the pretentiousness and conventionality of the bourgeoisie, it seems likely that one of the characters is being made fun of in this scene. But which one? the wife, for using an anglicism when an equivalent homegrown expression is available? The husband, whose hostility to *check-up* smacks of linguistic chauvinism? Perhaps Buñuel is making fun of both, for both these reasons. Whatever the answer, this short exchange neatly encapsulates an issue which has been a long-standing preoccupation of the French: the promotion and defence of their national language.

The emergence of the dual tradition

The promotionist half of this dual tradition can be traced to the time when *francien*, the medieval dialect of the Ile-de-France, slowly emerged from the patchwork of local Gallo-Romance idioms in northern France to become the linguistic standard of an increasingly unified nation. Its struggle for currency and respectability in a Europe dominated by Latin, the lingua franca of the church and international scholarship, was facilitated by legislative measures taken by successive rulers. The most significant of these were two articles contained in the Ordonnances de Villers-Cotterêts (1539), a series of edicts promulgated by François I with the intention of promoting the vernacular as the language of justice and administration. Procedures and decisions, contracts and commissions would no longer be written in Latin but 'prononcez, enregistrez et delivrez aux parties en langage maternel et non aultrement'.

Though aimed essentially at avoiding ambiguity and making legal decisions accessible to a wider population, Villers-Cotterêts stands as an early example of state intervention in the promotion of the national language. Its effect on the plurilingual France of the time was dramatic: in little more than ten years, French was being used for official purposes everywhere, even in areas where the French king had no jurisdiction.[1]

However, no sooner did French emerge from the shadow of Latin to become a language in which scholars chose to write, than its integrity was threatened from another direction. The prosperity and cultural vigour of post-Renaissance Italy became a source of inspiration in a France economically impoverished by generation of warfare. Italomania prevailed amongst the country's ruling elite and, as an inevitability of the cultural transfer which took place, a variety of Italian words were imported into French.

Resistance to this influx of italianisms by some leading literary figures of the day was robust. Du Bellay's *Deffense et Illustration de la Langue françoyse* (1549) and Henri Estienne's *La Precellence du langage françois* (1579) indicate how closely the nation's language had by this time become identified with national pride and prestige. These works were in fact laying the foundations of the second element of the promotionist-defensive tradition that has permeated all subsequent discussion on the integrity of the French language.

As France's military and cultural strength grew during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, further steps were taken to fuse political and linguistic unities into a national identity. French was codified through the activities of grammarians such as Vaugelas and through further state intervention in the establishment of the Académie Française. By 1783, when the Berlin Academy chose as its competition title *Qu'est-ce qui a fait de la langue française la langue universelle de l 'Europe* ?, the fact of of its universality was not in question. Rivarol's winning entry, published as *De l'universalité de la langue française*, marks the high point of French as an international language.

Colonial expansionism in the Nineteenth Century ensured the spread of French to other continents, but its pre-eminence amongst the cultured elite of Europe had largely disappeared. The prosperity of neighbouring Britain and the technological advances it had made during the Industrial Revolution began to exert an influence on French similar to that of Sixteenth Century Italy. Imports from English included such neologisms as *tunnel* (1825), *cab* (1848) and *express* (1849), all of which in fact had their origins in French. The growth of sport also added to the flow of English words across the Channel, for example *handicap* (1827), *turf* (1828) and *ring* (1829), and included a trickle of *-ing* terminations which were to account for a significant proportion of anglicisms in the next century.

Although the number of borrowings from English during the Nineteenth Century was relatively small, the defensive tradition showed itself to be alive and vigorous in the face of a growing anglomania. Metaphors of military aggression were frequently used to describe the influx of anglicisms, despite the alliance of England and France during the Crimean War. The academician Viennet even used verse to point up the contrast between current political and linguistic relationships:

Certes de nos voisins l'alliance m'enchante,
Mais leur langue à vrai dire est trop envahissante
Et jusque dans nos yeux nous jette à tout propos
Les substantifs sifflants des Saxons et des Scots.[2]

Though some influential literary figures, like Alfred de Musset, refused to take the current fad for anglicisms seriously, Viennet was not alone in seeing the vogue as a genuinely corrupting influence. The critic René de Gourmont, for example, wrote in 1899 of

> *les atteintes portées à la beauté et à l'intégrité de la langue française. Elles sont venues de l'anglais: après avoir souillé notre vocabulaire usuel, il va, si l 'on n'y prend garde, influencer la syntaxe, qui est comme l'épine dorsale du langage.*[3]

It seemed, however, that with the turn of the century the flood of borrowings was diminishing. The incidence of new arrivals from English decreased from 198 in the decade 1890–1900 to a mere 47 between 1920 and 1929. It was not until after World War II that the number once again began to rise significantly, provoking a new call to arms to defend French against what observers termed the invasion of anglicisms.[4]

It was in the person of a professor from the Sorbonne that the Post-War resurgence of the defensive tradition found its most vocal and aggressive proponent. In his book *Parlez-vous franglais*? René Etiemble launched a scathing attack on what he saw as a campaign of linguistic imperialism mobilised by the forces of anglophony to undermine the integrity of the French language and culture. His campaign served to focus the hostility of linguistic purists in the 1960s and, thanks to the wide publicity it received, took the debate on anglicisms into the public domain. His half-claims ten years later to have galvanised the French government into action to stem the tide of borrowings cannot be verified, but new legislative measures were introduced during the Sixties and Seventies in a bid to protect French from the importation of 'unnecessary' neologisms from other languages.

The *Loi Bas-Lauriol* of 1975 was an indication of how seriously the threat to the integrity of French was taken by the state. The law sought to ban anglicisms where equivalent French terms were available, especially in the areas of commerce, packaging and the media. Recommendations, set out in the *Journal Officiel* and subsequently incorporated into French language dictionaries, promoted, for example, the use of *cadreur* for *cameraman, ingénierie* for *engineering* and *bilan de santé* (rather than the *examen général* preferred by Buñuel) for *check-up*. But long before the advent of this legislation, a range of governmental organisations too numerous to list here[5] had already been set up for the purpose of promoting and defending the national language. After *Bas-Lauriol*, intervention in linguistic matters has continued through a range of state-funded agencies, though these are heavily outnumbered by private organisations, of which as many as 200–300 are in existence in France and the francophone world.

The most recent application of the legislative tradition to language matters is the law of 5 May 1994, sponsored by Jacques Toubon, Minister of Culture and Francophony. The *Loi Toubon* targets the same 'unnecessary' usage of foreign terms as *Bas-Lauriol*, especially in

> *les documents relatifs aux biens et services la publicité écrite, parlée ou audiovisuelle . . . , les inscriptions ou annonces 'opposées' ou 'faites' sur la voie publique dans un lieu ouvert au public ou dans un moyen de transport en commun . . .* [6]

Seen by its supporters as a necessary bulwark against the degallicisation of French, the law aroused strong antipathy amongst proponents of 'free trade' in language, who accused the Balladur government of attempting to restrict people's liberty of expression.

The reality of the 'invasion'

In the process of linguistic borrowing, it is lexis which is most susceptible to penetration. This can be illustrated by reference to *Histoire de moins en moins drôle* the opening chapter of *Parlez-vous franglais?*, which Etiemble crams with anglicisms. Of the first one hundred of these, only three (*full-time part-time* and *non-stop*) are not nouns or noun phrases. These inevitably include the names of things originated in an anglophone country (e.g. *un sandwich, un cocktail*) and reflect the need to give a name to a new thing or to a feature of another culture. (English speakers might speculate where they would keep their car if *garage* had not been borrowed, or what home-grown word might be used instead of *éclair*). Others have little claim for inclusion (*un garden, un roof*) for reasons other than snobbery and are not authenticated by inclusion in *Le Petit Robert*. Others again may be classed as ephemera and similarly have not taken root in the lexis of French. The reader of the 1990s can only view with puzzled amusement Etiemble's outrage at *le climb, le hully-gully* and *le madison*.[7]

A further feature of the predominance of lexis in linguistic borrowing is that many words are jargon terms, and therefore have no place in the vocabulary of the average language user. How many anglophones, for example, have heard of *eprom, telson* or *jigger*, let alone make active use of these terms? Even Etiemble had to acknowledge that of the 1000 most commonly used words in French, only one (*speaker*) was an anglicism. This term still finds a place in *Le Petit Robert* 1993, but its usage is already classified as *vieilli*.

The pattern of borrowings is further confused by selective specificity, where French uses only one meaning attaching to the English form. *Le haddock*, for example, means only the smoked variety, *un jack* is a telephone switchboard plug, *light* describes only low-calorie food and drink.

Yet other borrowings have taken on an identity of their own by a process of assimilation into French and are obscure in their meaning to native anglophones, even though the words themselves are familiar. What are, for example, *le clearing, un full, le kick*?[8] Another group of nouns, which have all the appearance of anglicisms, are in fact pseudo-English, such as *un tennisman, l'autostop* and *le footing*. Such confections have a degree of comprehensibility to native English speakers but do not represent authentic usage and cannot be classed as borrowings.

And so, because of the different types of anglicisms and the frequency of their usage, a simple headcount can only present a very general picture of the 'invasion'. In 1973, Etiemble pointed to research indicating that of the 50,000 words contained in the current edition *Le Petit Larousse*, 2% were anglicisms.[9] A decade or so later, Hagège was to estimate the incidence of clearly identifiable anglicisms as 2.5%.[10]

How accurately do these figures compare with the present situation? In *Le Petit Robert* 1993 there are about 1,000 readily identifiable anglicisms in approximately 50,000 headwords, a proportion of 2%. Only a tiny minority of these (some 0.35%) are not nouns or noun phrases. It is revealing to note that by applying the same criterion of identifiability to the incidence of borrowings by English from French amongst the 60,000 or so headwords of *Chambers Dictionary* 1993, a higher proportion emerges: 2.7%.

The evidence seems to suggest, then, that the 'invasion' of French by anglicisms is not sizeable enough to be a serious threat to the integrity of the language nor is its size increasing. Furthermore there is little to suggest that the fears for the health of French syntax voiced by de Gourmont nearly a century ago have been realised, despite the communications revolution that has taken place in the intervening period. Hagège discusses some changes which may have come about through the influence of English, such as increased use of passive constructions to the detriment of *on*, the omission of the verb *être* in certain specialised contexts and the coupling of *pouvoir* with *voir*, when traditionally *voir* alone has been sufficient.[11] But these changes, even if they are the result of the influence of English rather than instances of natural evolution, are of little significance. Hagège himself concludes that 'l'anglais n'a pas atteint le noyau de la langue francaise'.[12]

Does this mean that the combined forces of legislation and pressure groups have stemmed the flow of linguistic imports? Certainly some anglicisms have been ousted by the adoption of home-grown alternatives, such as *pipeline* by *oléoduc*, *computer* by *ordinateur*, and the previously-mentioned speaker by *annonceur* or *présentateur*. It is difficult to envisage, however, that *CB* will give way to the officially recommended but less economical *bande de fréquences banalisées*, *playback* to *présonorisation* or *sponsor* to *commanditaire*. *Check-up*, too, is probably here to stay.

The combination of forces which activate the borrowing process, from the simple need to avoid ambiguity in, say, scientific and technical writing, through the desire to attract and shock in the world of advertising to simple faddishness or snobbery in the wider population will prove more than a match for the restraining influences imposed from outside. If this were not so, the *Loi Toubon* of 1994 would not have been needed to reassert the principles expounded by *Bas-Lauriol* some 20 years previously.

Conclusion

The hostility of Etiemble and other purists to linguistic imports from Anglo-American sources is easy to understand. Though often less visible than other cultural icons such as baseball caps, fast-food outlets and CocaCola, they can give equal credence to accusations of cultural imperialism levelled at the USA. Furthermore, the apparent imbalance in this cultural transfer can been seen as less than healthy for the diversity of world cultures generally. But despite these anxieties, linguistic borrowing is an inevitability and will not be halted by the processes of law or the application of pressure by special interest groups. Indeed as Du Bellay points out in his *Deffense*,

> *Ce n'est point chose vicieuse, mais grandement louable: emprunter d'une langue étrangère les sentences et les mots pour les approprier à la sienne.*[13]

The concern of the francophone world for the health and vigour of its language is real and sincere, but the integrity of French would be more sharply threatened by a retreat into chauvinist insularity than by accepting words from other cultures. Languages evolve organically and must remain dynamic and adaptable if they are to serve their purpose. And fashions change. For all the resistance mobilised against it, the italomania of the Sixteenth Century enriched French through such borrowings as *capriccio* (1558), *arcata* (1562) and *facciata* (1565), which have not only been assimilated into French (*caprice*, *arcade* and *façade*), but have in their turn been re-exported to enrich English. Other italianisms, however, sank without trace as society and its cultural fashions changed. Similarly, though many Anglo-Saxon terms have undoubtedly taken up permanent residence in everyday French, many are so ephemeral as to have no lasting impact on the language or are too specialised to enjoy wide currency.

What of the future? There is a real possibility that English will become the lingua franca of international science and other specialist fields, thus fulfilling a function similar to that of Latin in medieval and Renaissance Europe. The Institut Pasteur bears witness to this development by replacing its journal *Annales* with a new publication written entirely in English and with an English title, aimed at providing French researchers with easy access to world readership. But, by the nature of what it describes, scientific English of the Twentyfirst Century may be seen as relatively culture-free, as was medieval Latin. If this is so, Nobel prizewinner Maurice Allais' scenario of a Europe 'qui tombe peu à peu sous une domination de fait de la culture anglo-saxonne'[14] will not materialise.

The dual tradition of promotion and defence of the French language, like other traditions endemic to French culture, is alive and flourishing. It is a healthy manifestation of a long-standing concern for national and cultural identity. There is a danger, however, that it may be hijacked by a purist faction motivated by a romantic nostalgia for past glories. Such a development would result in an introspective isolation totally at odds with the spirit of internationalism on which world stability depends. This internationalism must necessarily involve the import and export of words as well as commodities: nations who ignore this necessity will do so at their peril.

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5. see Rickard, op.cit. pp. 49–51.
6. *Le Monde*, 5 May 1994, p. 9.
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The Sounds of informal French

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Style-shifting

The ability to 'style-shift', that is to adapt one's spoken or written language in response to the situation or addressee is a major component of communicative competence. This latter term, introduced by Hymes (1971), refers to the ability to manipulate the sounds, syntax, and vocabulary of a language in response to the social context or the social function of the speech event. The scope of communicative competence may extend from smaller-scale linguistic phenomena (the use of *tu* and *vous*, or when to drop the negative particle *ne*, for example) to the more pragmatic aspects expressed through larger units: the linguistic expression of politeness, turn-taking in conversation, etc.

The importance of style-shifting increases in proportion to one's competence in a language, and to one's social competence; clearly, two-year-olds will have little occasion to style-shift, since the range of situations in which they find themselves is limited. The learner's position is analogous to that of the child who is acquiring the mother tongue: the speech events which the former is called upon to deal with are largely contrived, but their scope widens as greater linguistic competence is achieved. It seems reasonable to expect advanced learners – from Sixth Form onwards – to have at least a passive knowledge of the stylistic dimension as it affects language use, if not actually to control more than one style.

Advanced learners of French need to be made aware of stylistic variation on all levels of the target language, especially as their ability to style-shift in the mother tongue tends to operate intuitively. Both native-speakers and language learners seem to have a tendency to perceive style-shifting chiefly at the lexical and syntactic levels of the grammar: the use of *bagnole* rather than *voiture*, say, or the omission of *ne*, are processes which seem to have a higher cognitive profile, as it were, than sound variations.

This article examines some of the phonetic detail of what the sounds of 'official' or formal French undergo in casual style.

Stylistic and social variation are linked since formal speech is generally socially prestigious speech, i.e. characteristic of the upper or middle classes. Conversely, casual styles of speech will be closer to the *populaire*.

On the phonetic level, formal speech, which is nearer to the orthographic representation with all its redundancy, contrasts with casual speech in that the latter is marked by more elision of sounds. The learner of French needs to master a considerable set of elided forms in order to produce a convincing approximation to a native speaker's pronunciation in informal style. Thus to take a rather obvious example involving 'mute-e', a speaker may say either *la semaine* or *la s'maine* according to the context, i.e. the identity of the addressee, the relationship between the speakers, the formality of the situation, etc. The use of elision by native speakers also represents for the learner quite a substantial comprehension barrier, probably more so than the often-cited problem of unfamiliar vocabulary. As well as elision, assimilation and the non-realisation of some liaison forms are also characteristic of informal speech, and these processes will be further discussed below.

To refer to 'elided forms' seems to imply that the adoption of casual style always entails elision and only elision. The addition of extra sounds in casual style does indeed seem rather rare: the insertion of a mute-e to support certain consonant clusters is encountered, as in *un ourse̲, blanc, un filme̲ danois*, but this phenomenon does not seem to be much frowned upon as characteristic solely of 'careless' speech; compare how the analogous process which results in the stereotypically non-standard 'filum' is regarded in English.

Elision of consonants

However, elision rather than insertion of segments is overwhelmingly the general rule in casual spoken French. A fairly spectacular but by no means unusual example is *il me semble*, which in informal style reduces to *i'm'sem(b)'*, four or even five out of nine phonetic segments being elided. This phrase exemplifies several elision processes which will be discussed more fully below.

A close examination of some of the processes which take place makes the comprehension difficulties that learners experience understandable. Some spoken forms are far indeed from the pronunciation suggested by their graphic representation. Elision seems to affect some consonants more than others, but frequency of occurrence is no doubt a factor: the elision of 'l' from the articles and pronouns is a ready illustration. Some examples of this process may be more familiar than others. Thus *ils arrivent* > *iz arrivent* or even > *i arrivent*, or *ils vont* > *i vont* will be familiar, whereas *j'les ai vus* > *j'es ai vus* or *elle nous a dit* > *e nous a dit*, or even *elle est bien* > *e: bien* (where: denotes a long vowel), or *dans la cave* > *dans 'a cave* may be less so.

The process operating here is the simplification of groups of two or more consonants, although a single consonant may also be elided, as in the last example, or in *il y a* > *y a*. The consonants 'l' and 'r' seem particularly vulnerable to this process, being both frequently-occurring and phonetically weak, i.e. articulated with relatively little force: the 'r' of northern French, for example, is articulated with little friction, and the muscular effort required to realise it is small in comparison with that required to articulate a fricative such as 's'. Readers may like to compare the amount of effort required, and of audible friction produced, when French 'r' and 's' are produced in *Paris* and *Passy*.

Frequency of occurrence is again plainly an important factor in the elision of 'l' from, for example, *quelque chose* > *què'qu'chose* or *je sais plus* > *ch'ais p'us*.

Some word-internal reductions may have a higher profile for the learner, in that they may be more likely to be noticed and imitated on account of their comparative infrequence: *expliquer* > *espliquer* exemplifies a reduction of four consonants to three ('kspl' to 'spl') in a language where consonant clusters of more than two or three are not often found.

As well as 'l', 'r' is a consonant which is subject to much elision. It is the most frequent consonant in French, at least in the citation forms provided in dictionaries. The tendency to simplify word-final consonant groups results in such reductions as *chambre* > *chamb'* (where mute-e has been previously elided), *parle* > *pa:l*, *bonjour* > *bonjou:*.

Word-final consonant groups of the type exemplified by *chambre* occur fairly frequently in all styles of spoken French; along with all the infinitive verbs which share this phonetic feature – *être, prendre* etc. – are many nouns, of varying frequency of occurrence. This phonetic feature has been found to be stylistically sensitive in a corpus of speech presently being studied by the writer – tape-recordings of pupils aged 11–19 attending a *collège* and *lycée* in Lorraine speaking in conversational and interview style. The speakers were selected from two age-groups, 11–12 and 16–19. In conversational style, the informants were talking to each other, in the absence of the researcher. Interview style was one-to-one with the researcher. Thus in more formal speech words of this type tend to be pronounced in their full form, i.e. the mute-e in *autre* will be pronounced more often than in less formal style, while *autr'* is in turn more characteristic of formal style than *aut'*. This finding may appear surprising in northern French, where mute-e in this position seems generally thought of as being very largely absent in all styles.

Elision of vowels

In English, many vowels undergo in rapid speech reduction to the neutral vowel 'schwa', similar in quality to French mute-e: compare the careful and casual pronunciations of the first vowel in 'immediate'. The vowels of French seem in contrast to be fairly stable, even in casual style. Certain cases of centralisation have been observed: *je préfère > j'prefère*, for example, and between *c'était* and *c'tait* an intermediate *c'etait* is observable. This latter example illustrates the elision to which vowels in frequently-occurring contexts are vulnerable: reductions such as *déjà > d'jà, tu as > t'as, disons > d'zons > zons* probably do not constitute a very large set, but their frequency makes them important indicators of style.

Assimilation or 'harmony' as it affects vowels in contiguous syllables, although seemingly rather rare, is an interesting phenomenon; *secrétariat > sécrétariat* has been observed by the writer, as has the nasalisation of the first vowel in *maman*, and English-speaking learners may find comfort in knowing that native speakers too sometimes find themselves pronouncing *surtout > sourtout* in casual style.

But style-shifting does not appear to involve the French vowel system very saliently in Lorraine. The major exception to this relative stability is of course mute-e, whose liability to elision in certain contexts is recognised even by French grammarians; in *Le Petit Robert*, for example, the vowel is placed in brackets in the citation form where elision is judged to be likely. However, grammarians' prescriptions on when the vowel may be elided take little account of everyday speech. The conventional wisdom states that mute-e elision is governed above all by linguistic factors: specifically, that it may be elided between two consonants, as in *la s'maine*, but will be retained between three or more, as in *sur le trottoir*.

Assimilation

In addition to reduction and often consequent upon it, assimilation is the other major phonological feature of informal speech that a learner needs to be aware of. This process involves a consonant taking on one or more of the phonetic features of a neighbouring one. Thus in *je pense*, for example, mute-e may fall and bring into contact the consonant of *je*, in phonetic terms a voiced palatal fricative, and the 'p' of *pense*, an unvoiced bilabial plosive. 'Voice' refers to the vibration of the vocal cords, the feature which distinguishes 'b' from 'p', or 'd' from 't'. When 'j' and 'p' come into contact, 'j' becomes 'devoiced' under the influence of the following voiceless consonant. One sometimes sees this fact described in novels and *bandes dessinées*, where an attempt is made to represent dialogue in informal style; the usual rendering is *ch'pense*. Similar attempts are made with transcriptions such as *ch'crois, ch'ais pas*, etc.

A distinction needs to be made between *anticipatory* and *perseverative* assimilation. The former is more characteristic of French, and the foregoing examples illustrate the process. In anticipatory assimilation, a preceding consonant takes on some of the phonetic properties of the following one. This type of assimilation may result in the devoicing of a preceding voiced consonant, as we have seen; other examples are: *beaucoup d' succès > beaucoup t' succès, ch'min d'fer > ch'min t'fer*. The opposite process results in the voicing of a previously voiceless consonant. Examples of this include *chaque jour > chague jour, espèce de crétin > espèze de crétin, on s'voit > on z'voit*. The rarity in English of this type of assimilation makes it more difficult for the Anglophone learner to adopt.

This process is referred to as *voicing* assimilation, and is common in French. Other types of assimilation may involve the *place* and *manner* of articulation. The consonant 'p' was referred to above as an unvoiced bilabial plosive. Voice has already been explained. The place of articulation in 'p' is the two lips, as Latinists will recognise in the term 'bilabial'. The manner of articulating the consonant is to allow air to build up behind the lips, and then suddenly to release it in an (ex)plosive manner.

Assimilation involving the place of articulation seems particularly common in English; compare 'tem pence' and 'hambag', where 'n' has in both cases been 'labalised' under the influence of the following bilabial consonant. These speech processes are incidentally of the type that one notices and condemns in others, while practising them oneself. Place-of-articulation assimilation seems rather uncommon in French, or has at least been little commented on; examples cited in the literature include *le weekend prochain > le weekem prochain* and *i faut qu'on m'pousse > i faut qu'on pousse*. In the latter example, the first bilabial consonant 'm' is assimilated to the second, 'p', or very nearly; the only difference in casual speech between *i faut qu'on pousse* and *i faut qu'on m'pousse* may be a more emphatic pronunciation of the 'p'.

Manner-of-articulation assimilation seems more common. Elision of the mute-e of *de* in frequently-occurring words and phrases often brings the 'd' into contact with a neighbouring nasalised vowel, with the result that the dental plosive 'd' (the point of articulation being behind the teeth) becomes the dental nasal 'n': thus *on d'mande > on n'mande*. Here again, the assimilation is regressive and seems to confirm the general rule. Perhaps more familiar examples of assimilation of dentals are: *pendant > pen'nant* and *maintenant > main'nant*. A more spectacular example is *là-dedans > là-d'dans > là-n'nans*. Sceptical readers are assured that this example has been observed in the corpus of speech presently being studied by the writer, whose own (non-native) speech seems to have adopted *ah bon > ah mon*. The frequency of occurrence of *de*, or of the phrases in which it occurs in an individual's speech, obviously plays a part in influencing the likelihood of assimilation: secretaries and secretarial students are very likely to pronounce *traitement de texte > traitement n texte*. This example illustrates perseverative assimilation; the dental plosive 'd' becomes 'n', a dental nasal, under the influence of the preceding nasalised vowel.

A final example which also puts a strain on one's credulity is the denasalisation, or perhaps simply the devoicing, of the initial bilabial nasal in *m'sieur > p'sieur*. Here again, regressive assimilation is taking place.

Liaison

The traditional distinction between obligatory and optional liaison made by writers of grammars does not coincide at all points with the facts of everyday speech. For example, Grevisse considers both *nous_avons* and *c'est_à voir* obligatory, although the second type is rarely made in the corpus. However, Grevisse implicitly recognises that certain types of liaison are rarely made in casual style by noting that *'dans certains cas . . . même la langue populaire fait la liaison'* (p. 52). (The habitual use by French grammarians of *populaire* where *familière* would be more accurate betrays their seeming concern to compartmentalise language use on the basis of social class; in reality, everyone uses these features in casual style, not just the *classes populaires*.)

On the basis of non-prescriptive observation, one can say that certain liaison forms seem stable, in the sense that it is unlikely that they will not be made, whereas others are rarely made; yet others vary with speech style. Optional or variable liaison might be compared to other socially and stylistically sensitive features such as *ne*-deletion, but it is not yet clear whether the non-realisation of liaison consonants has reached a stage comparable to the latter phenomenon, where one might claim that *ne* is inserted to signal formal speech, rather deleted to indicate casual.

A few examples of optional liaison observed in the present data do seem to have been realised in order to make a temporary rupture in the solidary relationship between the speakers. Thus one little girl broke her rule of never making a liaison in phrases such as *c'est un village* in order to put her friend one down in an argument by invoking the adult world, as it were, as she demonstrated her superior knowledge of the discounts available on air fares. She pointed out that her friend would qualify for a discount, since with her brother and sister they were *à trois*. Her friend countered by saying that her brother and sister weren't going on holiday with her, to which the knowledgeable one retorted that was immaterial; it was the number of children in the family that counted: *'c'est_à trois quand même'*. Liaison in the context just mentioned is very rarely made in the corpus, in either conversation or interview style: one might classify it as being almost *interdite* from the point of view of communicative competence. The only contexts where liaison seems to be realised 100% of the time are those exemplified by *les_autres, mes_amis, vous_avez, deux_ans* etc. These examples seem to show that the liaison consonant 'z' is less vulnerable to deletion than 't' or 'n', although 'n', as in *on_a rien*, is much more often pronounced than not. Otherwise, liaison is variable. The liaison consonants in *quand on . . .* , *chez elle* or *dans un . . .* , *très intéressant* may all be dropped in casual style.

Against this trend, the fairly frequent pronunciation of the 't' of *quand* before a consonant and a slight pause seems to be an instance of 'hypercorrection', the overgeneralisation by speakers of a linguistic rule, which in French is responsible for more familiar examples of *fausse liaison, donne moi-z-en* being perhaps the example most often cited. An interesting specimen from the present data was provided by a 16-year-old girl opining: *je trouve que les hommes politiques sont trop-z-âgés.*

Pedagogical applications

The competent manipulation of a language's sounds, vocabulary and syntax in response to stylistic factors seems to call on both a thoroughly internalised knowledge of the systematically variable grammatical system of the language, and on a real-world knowledge of how and when to apply this variability. At first blush this seems a formidable requirement, and the relevance of the results of sociolinguistic studies to the acquisition of these aspects of communicative competence may not seem immediately obvious.

The point at issue is that for the learner, the raw data of language need to be analysed and articulated in terms which can be readily internalised; after a sufficient period and intensity of learning, the learner may be held to have replicated the native speaker's intuitive knowledge at a certain level of approximation. As every teacher knows, this process can be effected in two ways (usually in fact by a combination of the two): by exposure to the language, with the learner inducing and internalising the grammar from the data, and attempting to communicate in the target language, or by introducing the rules of the grammar to the learner and illustrating them with examples. The former method is characteristic of first language acquisition and of the communicative approach, the latter of more traditional second language learning.

Sociolinguists, who study real stretches of contemporary language as it is spoken by ordinary people, rather than using confected examples based on their own speech, as do those engaged in the more theoretical linguistic disciplines, may find themselves at a certain period in the analysis of a certain feature (mute-e for example) in a kind of *bain intensif* of the feature, resulting in the inductive process described above of the internalising of the rules governing its operation, while the attempt is made to formulate them.

This procedure could benefit advanced language learners. On the one hand, the inductive process of intuitively abstracting rules from the raw data, a sort of facsimile of language acquisition, is taking place. On the other, the conscious attempt to formulate a fragment of the variable grammar of the target language provides a useful intellectual gymnasium. Intensive and repeated study of a stretch of speech, however short and for whatever reason, but perhaps especially for the reasons sketched out above, will very likely result in the process described.

This method may not be practical at secondary level. As a minimum, however, advanced students, from Sixth Form onwards, should be introduced to the basics of French phonetics, for a knowledge of the sounds of the language should incidentally improve their pronunciation in one style at least.

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La Symphonie Pastorale, the Pastor's Diary. What the examiners want to know

Moya Longstaffe University of Ulster

A favourite question set by A-level examiners on Gide's *Symphonie Pastorale* is, in one form or another, 'What are the advantages and disadvantages of the diary form adopted in this novel?' I propose here to gather the points I would make in answer to the question, and to consider how to organise them, in the hope that these reflections may be of some value as guidance to sixth-form students studying Gide's text. I give page references for quotations, and these are to vol. IX of the *Œuvres Complètes*, edited by L. Martin-Chauffier, NRF, 1935.

Every essay must have a suitable shape: an introduction, a body (with all the flab eliminated!) and a conclusion. The structure of the essay on the Pastor's diary would look something like this:

A. The introduction

This is the place to think about the scope of the question, to outline briefly the aspects of the novel which must be dealt with, to consider what the advantages and disadvantages of the first person narrative could be. the obvious ones are as follows:

(i) Advantages: direct insight into the mind of the narrator, giving depth of psychological study;

(ii) Disadvantages: how can the reader see people and events from any other point of view than the narrator's? How reliable is he about himself and about other people? Why is he writing? For whom is he writing? Is he trying to persuade himself or a possible reader about something?

(iii) So what must I look at and for in the text? I must obviously consider what the narrator tells us about himself. But I must also consider what we can read between the lines, what we call the *unwitting testimony* of the text. I must ask how he treats his wife? How does he treat his son, and the rest of his family? Does this fit in with his picture of himself? How does his relationship with Gertrude evolve? Is he honest with her? Is he honest with himself in what concerns her? We shall examine these questions.

B. Analysis of the relevant aspects of the novel

Let's start with the root question: what motivates the Pastor to write? Is he trying to prove something, to himself or to anyone else?

First point: what we have is not exactly a diary: *Cahier I* deals exclusively with the past, with events which were set in train two and a half years earlier. It is written between February 10 and March 12 189., but only brings the story up to the preceding August. It is therefore not a diary but a re-telling of a story. Is the narrator trying to clarify the events in his own mind? To persuade himself or someone else of something? When he starts to write down this story, in February 189., he has known Gertrude for two and a half years, and has not yet acknowledged that he is passionately in love with her (that will not happen until the following April, and is the starting point of *Cahier II*). But he has already neglected his children in favour of Gertrude, caused great unhappiness to his wife, and since the preceding autumn, set up a sort of rival idealised home for himself in the house of the rich and philanthropic Louise de la M., in which he spends as much time as possible with Gertrude. He has moreover morally blackmailed his son

Jacques into giving up all claim on Gertrude with whom the young man is in love, and he has allowed Gertrude to think that marriage is out of the question for her because of her blindness, so that she sends Jacques away. *Cahier I* is an attempt to explain and justify all this, at least to himself.

There is perhaps a clue to deeper motivation. He sees himself in a very flattering light: 'J'ai trop souci de la vérité . . . ' (p. 10) he claims, and he does not hesitate to see himself in a Christ-like role: 'Quelques paroles du Christ me remontèrent du cœur aux lèvres' (p. 13), 'Je ramène la brebis perdue' (p. 12). It is significant that we never get to know the man except as *le Pasteur*. The irony in the novel is based upon the dichotomy between his conscious religious and moral attitudes and his deepest desires and egocentrism. In his own view of himself, his heart is noble. He recalls with a bitter pleasure how, when they were first engaged, Amélie used to smile upon 'chaque noble élan de mon cœur' (p. 69). But he knows that now she sees him in a very different light. How her reproaches rankle when he begins to devote an inordinate amount of time to the education of Gertrude! 'Il m'est pénible d'avoir à dire que ces reproches me venaient d'Amélie' (27 February, p. 22). Do these reproaches rankle so much because they are an echo of the nagging inner voice of an unacknowledged bad conscience? It is interesting to note that the Pastor in fact envisages his wife as a possible reader of this document. If so, he assures her that he pardons her offences. She is, according to him, suffering from what he sees as 'jalousie maternelle' (p. 23). It doesn't take much psychological insight on the reader's part to deduce firstly that he is defending himself against these reproaches, and that therefore the narrative is a piece of self-justification and must be read critically, and secondly that a wife may suffer from more than **maternal** jealousy if her husband begins to spend all his spare time, for whatever reason, with a young and attractive girl.

The Pastor's attitude is therefore suspect from the beginning, his lack of honesty with himself and consideration for his wife is patently obvious. We have already noticed the tone of pious self-congratulation: 'Béni soit le Seigneur pour m'avoir confié cette tâche!' he exclaims on the very first page, when describing 'comment je fus amené à m'occuper de Gertrude' (p. 5). And we wonder whether he is congratulating himself on being chosen, or congratulating God on having chosen him. Certainly he expresses no doubts about his own worthiness to be chosen. This tone of self-righteousness is at times almost caricatural, for example, in the reply he gives to his long-suffering wife, who asks him wearily, as he leads the apparently sub-human Gertrude into the house for the first time: 'Qu'est-ce que tu as l'intention de faire de ça?' (p. 11; note the utter exasperation expressed in the contemptuous 'ça' referring to Gertrude, an irritation so unlike Amélie's natural good-heartedness, as the Pastor himself remarks). His answer is lofty: '*Je ramène la brebis perdue*, dis-je avec le plus de solennité que je pus' (p. 12). The reader can hardly fail to observe mentally that 'la brébis perdue' was all the poor wife needed, with her large family, harsh living conditions, and the baby bawling its head off in its cot, as we read immediately after this noble reply. Even the Pastor himself has to admit that it is Amélie who has to carry out 'les plus lourds et les plus désagréables soins' (p. 17) when it comes to looking after Gertrude, which indeed she proceeds to do without further protest. He had of course known that he could count on what he calls 'le peu de résistance de ma femme' (p. 16), which means that Amélie is long-suffering and ultimately puts up with everything. It is not Amélie, but the Pastor himself who quickly becomes disillusioned by Gertrude. When she appears to be unteachable, he admits to a 'profonde déception' which quickly becomes 'un sentiment d'aversion' (p. 18). And the reason he gives is interesting: reality does not live up to his dream 'je m'étais fait tout un roman de l'éducation de Gertrude, et la réalité me forçait par trop d'en rabattre' (p. 18).

The novel could be described as the story of a man who cannot face reality. Reality is Amélie, it is marriage, it is the baby bawling in the cot, it is Gertrude having to be de-loused. Escape is the novel he is weaving in his mind about Gertrude, and a deliberate blindness to the difficulties of life. He is creating a dream-world for himself. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the description, in *Cahier II*, of the artificial family which the Pastor sets up for himself. The rich, philanthropic Mlle. Louise replaces Amélie, she is more like an ideal mother than a wife, Gertrude replaces the eldest daughter Sarah, with whom the Pastor feels nothing in common (to the point that he would like to send her away to boarding school); three well-behaved and tractable little blind girls replace the squabbling younger children and the crying baby, three well-dressed and obliging servants replace the crotchety Rosalie. 'Fortune et loisirs' (p. 70) are of course necessary to this style of gracious living, and Louise de la M. has plenty of both, while Amélie has neither. Louise's voice is musical, whereas Amélie's voice is hoarse from shouting at the children. Amélie and Sarah never talk about anything but the trivia of daily life, whereas Louise and Gertrude sit leaning upon each other while the Pastor reads to them the romantic poetry of Hugo and Lamartine. It is all very idyllic. But yet, once upon a time, Amélie too had seemed ethereal, at the time of their courtship she had been 'l'ange qui souriait naguère à chaque noble élan de mon cœur, que je rêvais d'associer indistinctement à ma vie, et qui me paraissait me précéder et me guider vers la lumière' (p. 69). He thirsts after the heroic and the beautiful, and perhaps we cannot blame him for regretting the circumscribed conditions of his existence. He chafes at the 'domestication des instincts' which marriage requires, and wishes that instead he could intoxicate Amélie with his aspirations, accomplish extraordinary feats for her: 'Ah! Plût à Dieu qu'elle réclamât de moi quelque action difficile! Avec quelle joie j'accomplirais pour elle le téméraire, le périlleux!' (p. 37) Alas, what he cannot cope with is the ordinary, the essentially human, and so life wrecks his dreams, as reality will kill Gertrude, whom he has tried to force to live within a dream, like one who is asleep, one whose eyes are not open, one who is blind.

The Pastor's whole image of his mission to save Gertrude smacks of the fairy-tale, in which he would play a pious Prince Charming to her Sleeping Beauty. On the first page of his account he describes her as 'Cette âme pieuse qu'il me semble que je n'ai fait sortir de la nuit que pour l'adoration et l'amour' (p. 5). The terms are ominously ambiguous: what sort of *adoration*? what sort of *amour*? Who is she to love and adore? He meets her after a journey into the unknown, full of mystery and magic: a ride through an unfamiliar landscape, past a 'petit lac mystérieux', in 'l'enchantement rose et doré du soir' (p. 6). Enchantment, silence, the strange cottage, the dead old witch, the spellbound princess, 'un être incertain, qui paraissit endormi' (p. 7): who comes to mind but Sleeping Beauty? Her face is beautiful but expressionless (p. 9), like a statue. Her eyes, like those of a statue, are unseeing. She awaits her Pygmalion to bring her to life, and when he does, he instantly falls in love with her, although he fails to admit this to himself. Her first smile is devastating: 'Oui, je le dis en vérité, jamais sourire d'aucun de mes enfants ne m'a inondé le cœur d'une aussi séraphique joie que fit celui que je vis poindre sur ce visage de statue certain matin où brusquement elle semble commencer à comprendre . . . ' (p. 24). *Ce visage de statue . . .* But Pygmalion should take note, he must hide nothing from her, for when her eyes open, all will be revealed to her.

There is an implicit warning already in the allusion which the Pastor's friend Dr Martins makes to Dickens' novel *The Cricket on the Hearth*, the story of the blind girl whose father makes her believe that her surroundings are those of luxury and comfort, instead of their real poverty. The irony of Gide's novel is underlined by the way in which the Pastor vows not to make such a mistake with Gertrude, and then proceeds for the rest of the novel to shield her (and indeed for a long time himself) from all knowledge of the real nature of his feelings for her, and the unhappiness that this is causing in his family. He wants her to live a fairy-tale, to imagine everything in the world as beautiful and untroubled as the harmonies of the Pastoral Symphony, 'ces harmonies ineffables' which paint 'non point le monde tel qu'il était, mais bien tel qu'il aurait pu être, qu'il pourrait être sans le mal et sans le péché' (p. 32). She will imagine 'lilies of Solomon' in fields where there are none, she will imagine the world without evil, as if the two of them were living in the Garden of Eden, in which there is no fault and no guilt. And no other people to consider either. Not, for example, his children, to whom, by his own admission he has never devoted much time: 'Si j'aime beaucoup mes enfants, je n'ai jamais cru que j'eusse beaucoup à m'occuper d'eux' (p. 23). And then he wonders why they all grow away from him, he sees in little Charlotte's tenderness only a sort of cupboard-love: 'On les croit tendres, ils sont cajoleurs et câlins' (p. 16). Jacques too, had once been loving, and is now, at the beginning of the story, 'si distant, si réservé' (p. 16). The reader has not much difficulty in working out where the blame for the failure of these relationships lies.

By the beginning of the *Cahier II*, in April, the Pastor has had to recognise what has been patently obvious to his wife and to the reader almost from the beginning: he is passionately in love with Gertrude. It is here that the first person narrative creates sympathy for him, and yet exasperation: a man plainly suffering, and in a great moral dilemma. He sees that he has been deliberately blind: 'dans le sentiment qui me penchait si passionnément vers Gertrude, je ne consentais pas à reconnaître quoi que ce soit de défendu' (p. 60). And yet he can still feel hurt that his wife and son (whose hopes of marriage to Gertrude he has destroyed) do not join him in the Easter communion, which he receives together with Gertrude. He feels that they have deliberately sought to spoil his joy, he magnanimously prays for his unkind wife, as he considers her. He now appears as a religious hypocrite. And he seeks to justify his own desires by a tendentious reading of the Gospels, a rejection of St. Paul, an ambiguous use of the terms of *bonheur*, *joie*, and *amour*: 'Est-ce trahir le Christ, est-ce diminuer, profaner l'Evangile que d'y voir surtout une *méthode pour arriver à la vie bienheureuse*?' (p. 63) The answer must or course be 'Yes, it is a betrayal, if you twist *vie bienheureuse* to mean only the fulfilment of your own desires.'

One must at least allow the Pastor the merit of being a faithful reporter. The conversations he records with Gertrude reveal the profundity of his passion, and the contrast of her honesty with his duplicity. He hides the truth in order to achieve his happiness, she refuses happiness purchased at the expense of truth: 'Je ne tiens pas à être heureuse. Je préfère savoir' (p. 74). He twists the meaning of words, she accepts no equivocation:

'Mais, Gertrude, pour avoir des enfants il faut être mariée.

– Ne me dites pas cela, Pasteur. Je sais que cela n'est pas vrai,' she replies, and then

'Vous m'avez dit souvent que les lois de Dieu étaient celles mêmes de l'amour.–

– L'amour qui parle ici n'est plus celui qu'on appelle aussi: charité.

– Est-ce par charité que vous m'aimez?

– Tu sais bien que non, ma Gertrude.

– Mais alors vous reconnaissez que notre amour échappe aux lois de Dieu?' (p. 75)

The Pastor takes advantage of Gertrude's blindness not only to separate her from his own son, but also to seduce her, for he knows that when she is able to see, she will not accept the fiction in which he has tried to cocoon her. And indeed the truth that she occupies in his heart the place which 'était celle d'une autre et qui s'en attristait' (p. 83) is one that she cannot live with. She makes reparation the only way she knows how, by bowing out of life itself. Life is not less, but *more* beautiful than she had imagined, but it is also more terrible, for she discovers the existence of evil at the same time as that of beauty: 'Quand vous m'avez donné la vue, mes yeux se sont ouverts sur un monde plus beau que je n'avais rêvé qu'il pût être [. . .] Ah! il faut pourtant bien que je vous le dise: ce que j'ai vu d'abord, c'est notre faute, notre péché . . . ' (p. 84) The Pastor's two victims, Gertrude and his son Jacques, both reject him utterly at the end of the novel, and only Amélie is left, faithful and forgiving to the end, to pray for a man destroyed by his failure to live by the truth.

C. The conclusion

(i) Gide's use of the first person narrator or diary form is in fact the essential element which bestows the ironic and tragic character upon the narrative. The novel is profoundly ironic, because there is a constant gap between what the Pastor tells us and what we read between the lines and interpret for ourselves.

(ii) But it is through this ironic gap that we are enabled to perceive the nature of events and the character of the actors in the drama in their own right, and not merely as the narrator portrays himself and them.

(iii) This irony borders at times on the comic, but in the end is tragic, since it is built upon a moral blindness which ends in catastrophe. We are enabled to experience that moral blindness at first hand through the device of the diary form and first person narrator, since we accompany the latter at all stages of his inner journey until he is forced to admit reality to himself. We are in relation to him as he is to Gertrude, we see clearly while he is blind.

(iv) The same story written in the third person would be quite a different novel, since the reader would not constantly be invited to evaluate for himself/herself the validity of the narrative voice, and the intellectual pleasure of being judge and jury would largely disappear.

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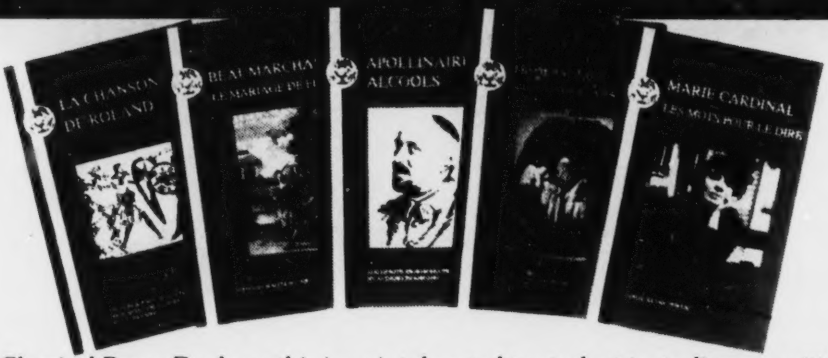

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Le nouveau contrat pour l'école en France: une perspective anglaise

Françoise Allen Brunel University College

Le 16 juin dernier, dans le cadre prestigieux de la Sorbonne, le Premier Ministre Edouard Balladur a présenté la version définitive du «Nouveau Contrat pour l'Ecole». Ce projet gouvernemental pour l'education, qui avait fait l'objet de multiples concertations depuis le début de l'année 1994, repose sur 155 propositions du ministre de l'Education Nationale, François Bayrou. La publication de ces dernières le 9 mai précédent a donné lieu à une consultation nationale. Tout le corps enseignant de France, des écoles primaires aux Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres (IUFM) en passant par les collèges et les lycées, a été mobilisé pendant une journée où les établissements scolaires sont restés fermés aux élèves afin de faciliter les débats. Selon un sondage de la Société française d'enquêtes par sondage (la SOFRES)[1] les 155 mesures seraient approuvées par 93% des Français et 83% des enseignants.

L'ampleur de la consultation n'indique que trop clairement l'enjeu politique que représente l'éducation dans le crescendo des préparatifs pour les élections présidentielles de 1995. Après l'échec des Contrats d'Insertion Professionnelle (CIP) l'hiver dernier, le gouvernement français a tenu à assurer une meilleure réception au Nouveau Contrat. On retrouve ici le même désir de conciliation que celui dont semblent témoigner les réformes de Sir Ron Dearing en Angleterre, elles aussi mises en place dans un temps record pour répondre aux fortes critiques de certains aspects du «National Currriculum».

Le contexte du Nouveau Contrat

Dans son discours d'introduction du 9 mai 1994,[2] François Bayrou retrace le contexte historique du Nouveau Contrat: «Après la démarche qui se donnait pour objectif principal d'augmenter le nombre, la quantité des jeunes Français formés par l'école, il nous faut essayer de proposer à tous ces jeunes Français désormais scolarisés une école de la meilleure qualité possible.» Ce thème de «qualite» est également un leitmotiv des réformes anglaises depuis l'Acte de 1988. Il est lié dans les deux pays au problème de l'emploi, dans la mesure ou le système éducatif se doit non seulement de garantir un acquis des connaissances générales jugées indispensables, mais aussi de répondre aux besoins industriels et commerciaux dans la lutte contre le chômage, cheval de bataille pour les différents partis politiques en France comme en Angleterre.

C'est donc sur ces grands axes – acquisition des savoirs essentiels et ouverture vers l'emploi – que s'articule le Nouveau Contrat pour l'Ecole, – pas si nouveau que cela puisqu'en fait, certaines propositions ne font que renforcer la loi d'orientation de juillet 1989 et la loi quinquennale pour l'emploi de décembre 1993.

Le contenu du Nouveau Contrat

Le texte officiel regroupe les 155 propositions sous sept rubriques: l'école primaire, le collège, le lycée, la formation professionnelle, l'école et son environnement, la vie des établissements, et les métiers de l'éducation. Le but n'est pas ici de passer chacune en revue en détail mais plutôt de juxtaposer certains aspects des réformes à la situation actuelle en Angleterre.

Ecole primaire

Les trois premières propositions du Nouveau Contrat signalent le retour aux

«3 'r's» également prôné Outre-Manche. Certes, la maîtrise de la langue française, la lecture (qui se voit octroyer pour la rentrée 94 un observatoire national visant à évaluer les méthodes d'apprentissage), l'arithmétique et le calcul mental ont toujours occupé une place primordiale dans les programmes français. Néanmoins, l'accent mis sur ces «savoirs essentiels» prend plus de relief quand on le contraste avec l'allègement des programmes dans d'autres domaines tels que l'histoire ou la géographie. Cette «hiérarchie» des priorités reflète bien celle qui semble avoir inspiré la révision récente des objectifs pour le secteur primaire en Angleterre.

Les langues vivantes

Il n'en va pas de même pour l'enseignement des langues vivantes, bien qu'il existe déjà de nombreuses initiatives dans ce domaine dans les deux pays. A partir de septembre 1995 tous les jeunes Français seront initiés à l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère pendant quinze minutes par jour dès le cours élémentaire, c'est à dire dès l'âge de six ans (proposition 7). Selon le sondage de la SOFRES, cette mesure reçoit l'approbation de 76% des parents, mais de seulement 48% des instituteurs. Dans son discours du 9 mai, M. Bayrou justifie cet «objectif très audacieux» par l'argument familier aux linguistes selon lequel «l'évolution neuro-physiologique, autour de l'âge de dix-onze ans, a bloqué la capacité à apprendre, et même à entendre les inflexions d'une autre langue.» Par contre, la commission de Sir Ron Dearing n'impose pas l'enseignement d'une langue vivante avant le passage dans le secondaire, et se contente de le mentionner comme une activité rendue possible dans le primaire par l'allègement des programmes à la discrétion des écoles. Ceci malgré la pression exercée par certains groupes tels qu' *ALL* et l'exemple concret de l'Ecosse où tous les élèves commencent à apprendre une langue vivante vers la fin de leurs études primaires depuis déjà plusieurs années.

Formation continue

Sans aucun doute, la mise en pratique de cette proposition nécessitera des initiatives en formation continue pour les enseignants. François Bayrou a ici peut-être surestimé le pouvoir des techniques audiovisuelles: «comme nous ne pouvons pas d'un coup de baguette magique transformer tous les instituteurs en professeurs de langue, le seul moyen est de conduire cet enseignement par des méthodes audiovisuelles, demain par satellite ou câble, dès l'année prochaine par des séances enregistrees.»[2] A long terme, l'obligation pour tous les nouveaux professeurs d'école (qui remplacent maintenant les instituteurs) formés dans les IUFM d'étudier, et de se préparer à enseigner, une langue étrangère devrait pallier à ce problème. Le gouvernement britannique, pour sa part, se refuse pour le moment à rendre cet élément obligatoire dans les programmes du Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) et du Bachelor of Education degree (B Ed) primaires. Il est tout au plus question d'exiger un GCSE en langue pour pouvoir s'inscrire à ces cours, comme c'est déjà le cas pour l'anglais. les mathématiques, et bientôt les sciences.

La généralisation de l'apprentissage d'une langue représente une volonté de faire accéder «au plus grand nombre, et spécialement aux moins favorisés, ce qui, pour l'instant, n'est proposé qu'à quelques-uns»[2]. Ce concept d'égalité d'accès est aussi à la base de la philosophie du «National Curriculum». Parallèlement à la formule adoptée pour les langues, François Bayrou propose un «programme quotidien de quinze minutes d'initiation à la musique», renforçant ainsi les programmes mis en place en 1985 (proposition 9). Contrairement aux langues, cette mesure ne séduit que 56% des parents.

Education civique

La position de l'éducation civique, qui rassemble sous une seule matière certains aspects de trois des thèmes interdisciplinaires du cursus anglais, à savoir la citoyenneté, l'environnement et la santé, se trouve consolidée (dès la rentrée 94), à la grande satisfaction de 87% des parents interrogés et de 66% des instituteurs. (proposition 10)

Tout comme en Angleterre, dans le Nouveau Contrat figure le souci articulé de prévenir les difficultés scolaires. En particulier la mise en œuvre de moyens de dépistage précoce dès l'école maternelle devrait conduire à un suivi plus structuré entre les divers intervenants et un meilleur système de liaison entre les enseignants et les parents concernés (proposition 14). «L'accroissement de l'effort de dépistage des inadaptations physiques et psychiques» est en fait la mesure concernant la phase primaire qui a eu la meilleure réception parmi les enseignants (91% favorables).

Le rôle des parents

Le besoin d'associer les parents à l'univers scolaire de leur enfant est clairement promu. La législation anglaise de ces dernières années a institué un système de communication, d'association et même, par l'intermédiaire des parents élus gouverneurs, de responsabilité et de contrôle, entre parents et établissement scolaire. Il semble que la France veuille aussi rompre les barrières entre l'univers familial et scolaire, comme en témoignent la publication des programmes pour les parents et la simplification du livret scolaire.

La semaine scolaire

En dernier lieu, la structure de la journée et de la semaine scolaire est remise en cause: retour des études dirigées de trente minutes prises sur le temps scolaire pour permettre aux enfants de faire leurs devoirs sous la tutelle d'un instituteur (proposition 16, approuvée par 86% des parents et 51% des enseignants primaires), et possibilité de réorganiser la semaine sur quatre jours pleins ou continuation de la semaine de quatre jours et demi en remettant les leçons du samedi matin au mercredi matin selon les préférences locales (proposition 15). Une certaine flexibilité donc, qui permet de prendre mieux en ligne de compte les besoins des parents ainsi que ceux des enfants. Ces options ne sont guère concevables en Angleterre où l'étalement horaire sur cinq jours est fermement établi.

Collège et lycée

On retrouve la même volonté de consolider les connaissances de base, de clarifier les objectifs et les contenus des programmes, et d'informer les parents au niveau du collège que dans le primaire (proposition 37). En Angleterre, c'est déjà chose faite grâce à l'introduction progressive du «National Curriculum». Et pourtant, le concept de cursus national existe depuis beaucoup plus longtemps en France mais la tendance jusqu'à présent était de fixer globalement les programmes pour chaque année plutôt que de les examiner en fonction des objectifs à atteindre.

La classe de sixième

La classe de sixième est redéfinie comme une année de transition où l'accent est mis sur la méthodologie «d'apprendre à apprendre» (proposition 40). Dans cet esprit, il est proposé de mettre en place une aide quotidienne au travail personnel en fin de journée. A partir de la cinquième, une nouvelle organisation des programmes et une meilleure orientation devraient permettre des parcours diversifiés afin d'offrir à chaque élève une expérience de réussite (proposition 28). A la différence de l'Angleterre, il existe en France l'alternative des collèges et lycées professionnels pour les enfants susceptibles de mieux réussir dans ces voies.

Les élèves en difficulté

L'effort de dépistage précoce des élèves en difficulté dans les classes primaires se poursuit par un dispositif de consolidation individualisé dans des classes à effectif réduit (proposition 27). Cette mesure, expérimentée en septembre 1994 en vue d'être généralisée en 1995, détient le record du sondage SOFRES: 93% des parents lui sont favorables et 95% des enseignants. Elle reflète une préoccupation croissante en France où la didactique pédagogique plus conventionnelle fait place petit à petit aux méthodes plus souples et plus adaptées aux besoins de l'individu qui sont couramment pratiquées en Angleterre.

Maîtrise du français

La maîtrise du français restant primordiale, une augmentation d'horaire lui est accordée, à titre expérimental d'abord pour septembre 1994. Il en va de même pour l'éducation physique et sportive, jusqu'ici plus négligée en France qu'en Angleterre (proposition 41). 72% des parents et 77% des enseignants sondés se déclarent favorables à ces mesures:

Langues vivantes

En ce qui concerne les langues étrangères, l'étude obligatoire d'une langue vivante continue dans le secondaire, mais il est à noter que François Bayrou veut introduire une seconde langue pour tous en quatrième à partir de septembre 1995 (proposition 42). Cette mesure, qui recueille 77% des suffrages parmi parents et enseignants, contraste nettement encore avec les propositions de Sir Ron Dearing qui sont généralement considérées comme affaiblissant la position de la seconde langue dans la mesure où elles se contentent de déterminer un programme minimum d'étude.

Parallèlement au développement des langues vivantes, il est proposé d'étendre l'accès aux langues mortes - traditionnellement enseignées dans les collèges les plus académiques – à tous les établissements sous forme d'une option latin en cinquième et d'une option grec en troisième à partir de 1996 (proposition 43). Le désir de démocratiser ces matières est donc plus présent en France qu'en Angleterre où elles doivent rivaliser avec d'autres pour occuper une place dans le peu de temps 'libre' laissé par le «National Curriculum». Cependant, le soutien du public semble tiède (seulement 40% des parents et 50% des enseignants pour le latin en cinquième).

L'éducation civique

L'éducation civique continue de prendre de l'importance. Le système pastoral étant pratiquement inexistant en France, cette matière, qui n'est pas sanctionnée par des examens, est la plus susceptible de remplir les fonctions du programme de «personal and social education» offert dans la plupart des écoles anglaises. Au niveau du collège, elle devra porter sur «les réalités juridiques, économiques et sociales de notre pays, sur la vie européenne et internationale, sur l'environnement et sur les droits et devoirs de chacun.» (proposition 44)

Le Nouveau Contrat

Les réformes du Nouveau Contrat s'efforcent à donner plus de cohérence au parcours éducatif de l'élève, comme en témoigne l'accent mis sur la consolidation dans les années «charnières» – septième/sixième et troisième/seconde. Ainsi, la classe de troisième, qui clôture les années au collège, «devient un temps privilégié de préparation aux enseignements généraux, technologiques ou professionnels des lycées: information sur les voies à suivre et les métiers"(proposition 29). La seconde, quant à elle, doit permettre «l'adaptation au lycée et la consolidation des méthodes» (proposition 54). Ces préoccupations reflètent bien la conception d'un processus éducatif continu jusqu'au baccalauréat alors qu'en Angleterre le «National Curriculum» se concentre sur le parcours jusqu'à l'âge de seize ans seulement. L'intention gouvernementale en France est d'encourager 80% des jeunes à devenir bacheliers d'ici l'an 2000.

Pour se faire, le Nouveau Contrat valorise le développement des voies technologiques et industrielles parallèlement aux options générales traditionnelles et aux options professionnelles (proposition 65). De plus, les passerelles entre ces catégories se multiplient. On retrouve ici des objectifs communs à ceux des équivalences selon le système des GNVQs en Angleterre. Dans les programmes de baccalauréat plus traditionnels, déjà très diversifiés depuis ces dernières années, de nouvelles options en éducation physique et sportive, en informatique et en histoire des arts ont été mises en place pour la rentrée 1994. L'ambition du ministre est de rendre cette multitude de choix accessibles à tous dès 1995, en ayant recours si besoin est aux cours à distance au moyen de multimédia. C'est également par eux qu'il entend offrir, à partir de la rentre 1995, la possibilité de continuer l'apprentissage d'une langue vivante aux lycéens dont les programmes d'étude ne contiennent plus cette option (proposition 60).

Métiers de l'éducation

Les mesures mentionnées ci-dessus ont des implications considérables pour la formation des enseignants. Tout d'abord, la clarification des objectifs et des contenus au niveau national devrait aider les IUFM à améliorer la qualité de la formation initiale. Les IUFM ont également une responsabilité envers la formation continue, tout comme les départements d'éducation dans les universités anglaises, mais ils servent le ministère dont ils dépendent directement. Ceci devrait leur permettre d'organiser une réponse systématique aux besoins des enseignants face aux nouvelles propositions (propositions 147 et 148).

La Première année

Dans le Nouveau Contrat lui-même, certaines dispositions sont prévues à partir de 1995 au bénéfice du corps enseignant. Ainsi, la première nomination ne pourra plus être sur un poste 'difficile' sauf si l'enseignant débutant le choisit (proposition 133; l'affectation aux postes vacants est gérée par les rectorats d'académie en France). De même, les débutants recevront de l'aide pendant la première année (proposition 145). Cette innovation est un fait coutumier en Angleterre où la disparition de l'année probatoire a fait place à une assistance organisée par les autorités locales ou l'établissement scolaire pour les enseignants nouvellement qualifiés. Les instituteurs trouveront leurs tâches administratives allégées (proposition 17), tandis que les professeurs du second degré recevront un crédit équivalent à trois jours par an pour la concertation et le travail en équipe (proposition 150). Enfin, les enseignants seront associés a l'élaboration des programmes et des examens (proposition 136). Il transparaît de ces mesures une nouvelle politique de gestion qui fait appel à la coopération entre professionnels et qui témoigne d'une certaine confiance de la part du gouvernement en ceux qui représentent le «terrain».

Conclusion

Si la presse française s'est accordée à reconnaître le bien-fondé des réformes gouvernementales et l'adresse du ministre à rallier les suffrages de l'opinion publique et des enseignants, elle a aussi émis des réserves sur la viabilité des nouvelles propositions en raison de leur coût. En effet, le premier ministre Edouard Balladur a su exprimer sa satisfaction mais s'est bien gardé de mentionner un dispositif budgétaire, préférant attendre les résultats des débats parlementaires en automne. Aux dires du Figaro, malgré les réclamations des syndicats et des fédérations de parents d'élèves pour obtenir davantage de crédits, le budget de l'Education Nationale s'élèverait déjà à quatre cent soixante milliards de francs, soit 6,6% du produit intérieur brut de la Nation.[3] Des mesures telles que l'initiation aux langues vivantes, la diminution des effectifs dans les classes accueillant des élèves handicapés, les nouvelles options dans le second degré, et le développement de l'informatique demandent des investissements considérables qui pourraient venir d'economies détrimentales pour d'autres domaines. D'autre part, l'incertitude existe en ce qui concerne les mesures annoncées pour septembre 95 à cause des élections présidentielles au printemps prochain qui pourraient entraîner d'autres changements. Bien que 78% des parents et 69% des enseignants interrogés par la SOFRES jugent les mesures proposées efficaces ou assez efficaces, 57% estiment qu'elles n'entreront en application qu'en faible partie. Il faudra donc attendre la rentrée 1995 pour évaluer pleinement la portée de ce Nouveau Contrat pour l'Ecole.

Notes et Références

1. Le sondage de la SOFRES a été réalisé:
   - sur un échantillon national représentatif des personnels du ministère de l'Education Nationale de 600 personnes (du 16 au 26 mai 1994
   - sur un échantillon national representatif de 1000 parents (8 et 9 juin 1994)
2. *Nouveau Contrat pour l'Ecole*, intervention de François Bayrou, Maison de la Chimie (9 mai 1994)
3. *Ecole publique la note est salée*, article d'Alain Berger, Figaro Magazine (29 janvier 1994)

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L'Enseignement professionnel pour l'Europe

Bo Jiang, W. J. Morgan Université de Nottingham
et
C. Springer Délégation Académique de la Formation Continue, Strasbourg

La Communauté Européenne reconnaît depuis longtemps le besoin de développer l'éducation professionnelle dans la dimension européenne. Un projet unique dans cette direction a été exploité l'année dernière dans deux régions: dans les East-Midlands en Grande-Bretagne et en Alsace en France.

Le projet appelé «Towards a European Curriculum» a pour objectif d'encourager une approche européenne dans les secteurs de l'éducation professionnelle entre ces deux régions, y compris les collèges de Further Education (au-delà de 16 ans) en Angleterre et les lycées professionnels en France, ainsi que d'autres institutions de formation professionnelle. La nature et l'ampleur des objectifs du projet en ont fait un exemple exceptionnel de coopération européenne dans le domaine de l'éducation.

Avec le soutien financier de la part du ministère de l'Emploi anglais dans le cadre de son «Development Prospectus 1992–93», le projet a été mis en place avec l'expérience et la connaissance communes. Il a été planifié, organisé et implanté au niveau régional. En effet, ce genre de projet pourrait être plus efficace et moins coûteux que les projets individuels.

Formation du personnel

La formation du personnel a été indentifiée comme la clé du changement du curriculum dans le contexte européen. Du côté anglais, le projet a été initié par les Conseils régionaux de formation et d'entreprise (TEC) et la Further Education Euro Unit (organisme ayant pour but de promouvoir l'éducation professionnelle dans le cadre de l'Europe) des East-Midlands. A travers les programmes d'échange et de coopération, le projet a permis aux enseignants d'acquérir la connaissance et la confiance de travailler dans une autre langue et dans une autre culture.

Au cours d'un an de projet, les collèges de Further Education des East-Midlands ont établi des liens spécifiques avec les lycées professionnels et techniques d'Alsace, région prospère dans le Nord-Est de la France. Il s'agissait de renforcer l'engagement des personnels de collège de différents niveaux dans les programmes européens.

Les bénéfices

Les participants anglais ont bénéficié d'une expérience pratique de l'éducation professionnelle et de la formation en France tout en apprenant le français et la culture française. Les managers des collèges anglais ont eu une occasion initiale, à travers une visite en Alsace, de sélectionner leurs partenaires français, avec qui ils pourraient travailler avec efficacité, et d'engager les collèges appropriés dans un programme de développement de trois ans. Après leur visite, les managers ont disséminé à leurs collègues les informations les plus détaillées en ce qui concerne le système français et les institutions partenariats. Les représantants des Conseils de formation et d'entreprise ont également contribué au programme.

Plus tard, le programme a été élargi aux autres enseignants du collège lorsque les projets communs et les expériences de placement de stage ont été mis sur pied. Les relations de travail sont basées sur les intérêts mutuels entre les enseignants et étudiants anglais et français.

Le groupe-pilote d'étudiants anglais a obtenu l'occasion d'ajouter à son bulletin de note l'expérience d'étude acquise dans le contexte français.

Les collèges des East-Midlands se sont montrés très actifs et enthousiastes. Dans un premier temps, parmi les 35 collèges de la région, 30 ont répondu à l'invitation de participer au projet. Seulement trois collèges ont abandonné le projet au cours de son développement. Le taux de participation maintenu à un niveau si élevé doit être reconnu comme un succès considérable.

Le projet a été vu par tous les participants comme une opportunité importante. Un des responsables a fait le commentaire suivant: «Il est particulièrement important pour le secteur professionnel de prendre action dans une situation où la mobilité de force de travail en Europe est de plus en plus fréquente».

Les Participants

Plus de 200 enseignants et étudiants appartenant aux 21 différentes spécialités d'étude ont directement participé au projet, avec une majorité de collèges qui coopèrent au niveau BTEC (équivalent du niveau Bac Pro). Les business et finance occupaient 32% des participants du projet, avec l'ingénierie, l'agriculture et les études hôtelières occupant 11% respectivement. Les autres spécialités d'étude comprenaient la construction, la maintenance de voiture, coiffure, les soins de beauté, et la peinture. Les fonctionnaires des Conseils de formation et d'entreprise et du ministère de l'Emploi y ont participé aussi.

Le principal d'un collège a dit que le projet permettait de donner aux enseignants une vue sur le système d'éducation français, et sur les pratiques institutionnelles, le curriculum, etc. «Tout cela sera très utile pour améliorer nos conditions et moyens d'offre pour nos étudiants».

Les étudiants eux aussi ont eu une opinion positive sur leur séjour en France. Cela a été reflété par leur forte motivation personnelle. Ils ont beaucoup apprécié le soutien et la hospitalité qu'ils ont reçus de la part des familles françaises qui les ont accueillis. Les enseignants et le personnel anglais et français les ont beaucoup aidés aussi. La majorité absolue des étudiants ont fini leur séjour avec succès et joie, comme disait un étudiant: «je considère que le programme entier, c'est-à-dire l'enseignement, l'apprentissage des étudiants et de l'amélioration de la compréhension et de la coopération entre les deux pays, est très utile».

Pour diffuser l'information aux personnes concernées, deux réunions d'information d'une certaine ampleur ont été tenues aux mois de mars et de mai 1993 en Grande-Bretagne, avec un nombre significatif de participants français.

Conclusions

Un consensus a été trouvé en ce qui concerne les difficultés qui ont besoin d'être encore résolues et les moyens de les résoudre. L'accent sera mis davantage sur la préparation linguistique et culturelle, l'accord préliminaire pour le placement de stage en entreprise et l'amélioration de la communication directe entre les collèges et les lycées français.

Les différences fondamentales restent dans le curriculum et l'accréditation, qui ne peuvent pas être résolues au niveau régional. Si l'accréditation doit avoir une signification, ella devra être discutée au plus haut niveau, c'est-à-dire au niveau des relations bilatérales, ou plus largement de la Communauté européenne. Néanmoins, l'expérience d'un tel échange au niveau régional peut jouer un rôle de stimulation pour ouvrir l'horizon des changements possibles de politique.

Le projet East-Midlands/Alsace a été un exercice de tâtonnement de chemin. Maintenant, la voie est tracée pour les Français qui sont en train de gagner l'expérience dans les conditions anglaises.

Le succès du projet revient à ceux qui ont eu la vision originale et la détermination d'en faire une réalité.

News and Notes

French Challenge

According to a BBC News Release which commented on the results of a new BBC/MORI poll 'the majority of the population does not know the meaning of common French phrases such as *vin de table, rive gauche* and *c'est la vie*? This was announced at the launch of the BBC season *French Challenge*.

The poll reveals that 62% of British adults consider their conversational French to be 'very poor' or 'terrible' and 53% rate their understanding of the French language just as badly. This is despite the fact that almost three people in five have had French lessons at school, most for more than two years. Just one person in eight considers himself/herself to be good at speaking French. The good news is that people are ready to learn. One in three of the nation's adults says they are interested in turning their student *franglais* into fluent *français*.

MORI interviewed a representative sample of 1,069 respondents aged 15+. Interviews were carried out in 149 constituency sampling points throughout Great Britain and the interviews took place in June this year.

The poll also shows that though they may have a long way to go in learning the language, the British are keen fans of things French. In particular they like the food and the fast trains in France, both of which are considered to be better than in Britain. We associate French culture with a relaxed way of life and we also like the sophisticated image of our Gallic neighbours.

Quoted from a BBC News Release.

Listening to Radio France in Europe

Recent information from Radio France announces that it is transmitting three of its most important stations, *France Info, France Inter* and *France Culture Europe* on TV5 Europe sound sub-carriers on Eutelsat 11-F1. *France Inter* is also broadcast on the Long Wave. It is referred to as 'the generalist, wide audience channel with dense, extensive and in-depth news, reinforced with reports, completed by debates and the intervention of its many guests . . . around the clock broadcasting with 5 million listeners every day in France'.

Radio France frequencies in Eutelsat 11-F1: *France Info* 7.20 MHz, *France Inter* 7.38 MHz, *France Culture Europe* 7.56 MHz.

If readers are interested in subscribing to *La Semaine* a weekly magazine presenting Radio France programmes they should contact Radio France, Direction des Affaires Internationales, 116 avenue du Président Kennedy, 75786 Paris Cedex 16, France.

Call for proposals from the American M.L.A.

The Modern Language Association's book publication programme is seeking proposals for its Texts and Translations series. The purpose of the series is to provide students with important literary texts that are not available in the United States and Canada at a price students can afford. Companion volumes in the original language and in translation are aimed at students in upper-level-undergraduate and graduate courses. The series especially welcomes texts in areas and from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in the classroom. For more information, please write or call: Martha Evans, Director of Book Publications, Modern Language Association, 10 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003. Tel: (212) 614-6338. Fax: (212) 477-9863.

Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (FIPF)

Report from Michael Buckby

Tout voyage commence par le premier pas: comment lancer un échange télématique

ALL, along with associations of French teachers in Belgium, Denmark and Greece, has, under the auspices of the Commission de l'Europe de l'Ouest (CEO) of the Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français (FIPF) and with Lingua funding, taken part in a project to establish an E-mail network between the four countries to encourage students in secondary schools to communicate with each other, using French. In the UK the project has been coordinated by Michael Buckby. What follows is his contribution to the project's report to Lingua at the end of the second year of the project, on starting off an E-mail exchange.

Créer, maintenir et profiter au maximum d'un réseau basé sur l'utilisation du courrier électronique, cela peut être un voyage très long. Il est donc normal pour ceux qui vont faire ce voyage ensemble de commencer par se présenter, par apprendre à se connaître les uns les autres.

Puisqu'il s'agit, dans un réseau comme le nôtre, de plusieurs centaines de participants, il serait difficile dès le début de se présenter chacun individuellement. Si chaque participant se présentait, les autres passeraient des semaines entières à lire toutes ces présentations et risqueraient d'y perdre beaucoup de temps et, ce qui serait encore pire au début de ce voyage, de s'ennuyer. Il s'est donc avéré plus pratique de demander aux élèves de travailler en groupes pour préparer leurs auto-présentations. Ce travail en groupe (des groupes de quatre à huit élèves, en général) a tout de suite révélé un avantage important des échanges télématiques: il ne s'agit pas que de l'expression et de la compréhension écrites. Au contraire, la préparation des messages à envoyer et la lecture des messages reçus provoque l'utilisation animée de l'expression et de la compréhension orales, largement encouragée et aidée par le travail fréquent en groupe.

Dans cette auto-présentation, tout le monde était d'accord sur l'importance d'aller au-delà d'une description personnelle qui risquerait d'être banale et de très peu d'intérêt. On a plutôt encouragé les élèves à parler de leur école, de leur ville et de leur région, en tenant compte du fait que leur public consiste surtout d'autres jeunes dans d'autres pays. Cela a permis aux élèves de choisir leurs groupes de travail en fonction de ce qu'ils voulaient présenter (la classe, l'école, la ville ou la région). Cette organisation a aussi provoqué, de la façon la plus naturelle, un travail oral: chaque groupe a pu présenter aux autres ce qu'il a préparé, et les autres ont pu y réagir et proposer des idées supplémentaires.

En établissant le programme et en choisissant les thèmes qui y sont inclus, les professeurs participants ont fait exprès de choisir des thèmes qui relèvent de ce qui se fait normalement en classe et qui se trouvent aussi dans les programmes nationaux. Il fallait absolument que le travail fait dans le contexte des échanges télématiques relève de ce que les élèves feraient normalement et que l'utilisation du courrier électronique améliore la qualité de leur travail et la motivation des élèves sans rajouter au travail des élèves et de leurs professeurs et sans les égarer du chemin proposé par le programme.

A full report together with Examples of this work will appear in the next issue, June 1995.

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Books and Materials received

The following books and materials have been received from the publishers. Items marked * are available for review by ringing 0532 679258 after 6 p.m.

* **French Culture since 1945.** Edited by Malcolm Cook. *Longman Group 1993. ISBN 0 582 08806 2. £12.99.*
A survey of French cultural developments since the war, including the arts, the media, Paris versus the provinces, gender issues, etc. For A level students and undergraduates in French or European Studies.

* **L'Express: aujourd'hui la France.** Ross Steele and José Pavis. *OUP 1994. ISBN 0 19 912202 4. £7.50.*
La France et les Français en mouvement vers l'an 2000. Articles with vocabulary, comprehension, group activities, etc., for developing written and spoken French.

* **Le français par les mots croisés.** Pour débutants. *European Language Institute. ISBN 88 85148 14 X. £4.25.*

* **Le français? Oui, merci.** *European Language Institute. ISBN 88 85148 03 4. £4.25. Plus de 1000 mots avec jeux et exercices.*

* **French verbs and vocabulary bingo games.** Constance Corssar and Barbara Snyder. *National Textbook Company. ISBN 0 8442 1307 1. £24.95.* 68 black-line masters.

* **Strategies: Formation à distance, the French programme.** *Collins Educational and Thames Television. ISBN 0 00320104 X. Pack with copymasters, teacher's guide and 2 videos.*

* **Learning strategies: Formation à distance, the French programme. Training pack.** *Collins Educational and Thames Television. ISBN 0 00 320 103 1. Contains teacher's manual, video and 2 audio cassettes.*

* **Au point.** Michèle Deane, Bob Powell and Elaine Armstrong. *The University of Bath and Thomas Nelson. June 1994.*

Student's book	*ISBN 0 17 449135 2*	*£12.99*
Teacher's resource book	*ISBN 0 17 449138 7*	*£30.00*
Cassette pack of (3 cassettes)	*ISBN 0 17 499139 5*	*£50.00 + VAT*

Video and IT components are currently under research. New course materials for A-level French.

* **Discourse variety in contemporary French.** Edited by James A. Coleman and Robert Crawshaw. *CILT. June 1994. ISBN 1 874016 27 5. £9.50 + £1.70 postage for the UK.*
Descriptive and pedagogical approaches to language learning and teaching.

* **French for communication 1979–1990.** Roy Dunning. *Multilingual Matters Ltd. March 1994. ISBN 1 85359 223 4. £11.95.*
The theoretical and practical background to the development of a communicative language teaching project in Leicestershire.

* **Entracte.** Andrew Colley. *Nelson. Omnibus pack: ISBN 0 17 439263 X. £8.50.*
A pack of 6 plays and follow-up materials, suitable for all abilities in the 12–16 age range. Each title is also available in a pack of five copies, price £6.95.

* **Let's play games in French.** Bernard Crawshaw. *National Textbook Company. ISBN 0 8442 1269 1. £8.95.* Classroom games, songs, etc.

* **Fréquence Jeunes.** G. Capelle, M. Cavalli and N. Gidon. *Hachette. 1994.*
Livre de l'élève ISBN 2 01 154978 7 £6.95.
Cahier d'exercices ISBN 2 01 021237 1 £3.95.
Part I of a new course for secondary schools. Cassettes and a teacher's guide are also available, but not sent for review. Book 2 is about to publish.

* **Etoiles 2 Assessment Pack.** *BBC and Longman. 1994. ISBN 0 582 21667 2A. £19.50.*
Unit by unit guide to continuous assessment, photocopiable charts and record sheets, differentiation, etc.

* **Marcel Aymé: Uranus and La Tête des autres.** Christopher Lloyd. *University of Glasgow French and German Publications. 1994. ISBN 0 85261 445 4. £3.95.*
The latest in the Glasgow Introductory Guides to French Literature. La Tête des autres is an NEAB A Level text.

* **Pocket French Dictionary.** *Larousse. French/English, English/French. New publication. ISBN 2 03 430700 3. £3.99.*

* **Concise French Dictionary.** *Larousse. French/English, English/French. New publication. ISBN 2 03 430300 8. £9.99.*

* **Standard French Dictionary.** *Larousse. French/English. English/French. New publication. ISBN 2 03 430250 8. £15.99.*

* **French Dictionary.** *Unabridged edition. Larousse. French/English. English/French. New publication. ISBN 2 03 430100 5. £25.00.*

* **Grand Dictionnaire.** *Larousse. Volume 1 French/English. ISBN 2 03 401301 8. £17.50. Volume 2 English/French. ISBN 2 03 401302 6. £17.50.* Major new publication.

* **Access to French.** *Humberside Education Services. For pupils with special educational needs. 1994. Designed and published by The Educational Publications Unit, Humberside Education Centre, Coronation Road North, Hull HU5 5RL. £95.*
Two ring binders and four audio tapes. The materials have been written by a team of linguists and teachers of French in special schools. There are 15 modules (En ville, ma famille et mes animaux, la salle de classe, les passe-temps, etc.) with a balanced coverage of all the attainment targets.

* **Compo Pub.** Phil Powrie. *School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 1993.*
Manuel de l'étudiant ISBN 1 898118 00 0.
Manuel de l'animateur ISBN 1 898118 01 9.
Cours de composition publicitaire: niveau supérieur.

* **The Changing Voices of Europe.** Edited by M. M. Parry, W. V. Davies and R. A. M. Temple. *The University of Wales Press. September 1994. ISBN 0 7083 1259 4. £35.00. Papers in honour of Professor Glanville Price.*
Social and political changes and their linguistic repercussions, past, present and future.

* **Breakthrough French Activity Book.** Stephanie Rybak *Macmillan Press Ltd, 1994. ISBN 0-333 62574.9.*
Practice for beginners in French in the Breakthrough Language Series – a self study resource. Extra practice in reading and writing skills.

* **Spirale 3 teacher's book.** Jacqueline Jenkins and Barry Jones. *Hodder and Stoughton. August 1994. ISBN 0 340 54753 7. £18.99.*
Teacher's manual to accompany Part 3 of the course.

* **Classroom – based Assessment in Modern Languages.** Dorothy Thomas. *ISBN 0 903846 09 8. £7.00.*

* **Co-ordinating IT in the Modern Languages Faculty.** Terry Atkinson. *ISBN 0 903846 10 1. £7.00.*

* **Differentiation and Progression in Modern Languages.** Dorothy Thomas. *ISBN 0 903846 15 2. £7.00.*
The first three titles from a new series 'INSET resources for modern languages' published by ALL. Available from the ALL office in Rugby. cheques with order. 10% discount for members.

Reviews

Reviews Editor
Sheila Smalley

Avantage Part 3. Rosi McNab. *Heinemann. 1994.*

Pupil's Book ISBN 435 37430 3. £6.75.
Resource & Assessment File ISBN 435 37434 6. £51.50.
Teacher's Guide ISBN 435 37433 8. £17.50.
Cassettes (pack of 4) ISBN 435 37431 1. £51.95 + £9.09 VAT.
Flashcards (48) ISBN 435374354. £37.95.
Cards pack (4 sets of 5 card games) ISBN 435 37435 4. £20.95.
Teacher's reference pack (one copy of the R and A file, the guide, 4 cassettes and flashcards) ISBN 435 37436 2. £150.00 + £9.09 VAT.
Evaluation pack (R and A file, Teacher's Guide, Pupil's Book and sample cassette) ISBN 435 37429 X. £56.00.
An evaluation pack was available for review.

My first reaction on opening the Avantage 3 Pupil's Book was to think, 'Yes, I could work from this!', my next to think, 'Yes, my students could work from this!' The presentation is colourful, and clear, and immediately attractive to the eye. Would a closer scrutiny bring disappointment, or a confirmation of this first favourable impression?

Progression from one task to another in the Pupil's Book is obvious, and eminently suitable for a student autonomy approach as well as for more traditional class use. Each double-page spread is a unit within one of the six modules that make up the book. Instructions are given in French (of course!), and there is a glossary of these at the back of the book, as well as a list of 'phrases utiles', e.g., Je ne comprends pas; Il/Elle a pris mon/ma/mes . . . ! French-English and a short English-French vocabulary lists are also provided. So simply is the National Curriculum requirement to develop self-study skills met. And once you turn over the page, you know you have 'done' that bit of language – promoting that sense of achievement for learners that encourages further efforts.

After three units there is a 'Mini-test', then a 'Récréation' or a 'Page de lecture' with examples of authentic language. Nine units altogether make up a module, and a 'Contrôle' is available in the Resource File. Continuous assessment is supported in the Teacher's File by the clear labelling of assessment opportunities for each unit, together with their appropriate National Curriculum levels. It is envisaged that students may be working at National Curriculum levels 6–7 by the end of the book.

Topics covered include personal identification, leisure interests, the world around us and the environment, the body, food, holidays, clothing and fashion, travel and transport, and a final 'write-your-own newspaper' module, which is intentionally optional. There is plenty of eye-catching material, pitched at a level which should appeal to Year 9 students.

Additional material in the Resource File consists of worksheets designed to support slower learners, plus 'Au choix' sheets at reinforcement and extension levels. The opportunity for using each sheet is clearly indicated in the Teacher's Guide. In addition to the various types of worksheet, Avantage 3 provides wordlists for each module, and 'Word pattern' and 'Verb' sheets to support grammar teaching where appropriate or desired. Each type of worksheet is presented in its own section of the File, easily accessible once you have found your way around the different categories.

The Teacher's Guide is wirebound (less bulky than an A4 ring-file), and provides a comprehensive and easy-to-follow guide through the teaching sequence. Each module is summarised at the beginning of the section, and units needed to ensure coverage of the material by a 'fast route' are clearly marked. It was encouraging to find, too, that materials needed for a unit on TV programmes were indicated at the beginning of the *preceding* unit – how better to prevent that last-minute panic of finding oneself short of a precious piece of material! (Of course, we all know it *hardly ever* happens!) There is ample support for the teacher who likes to 'go by the book', and ample material for the 'freelancer' to choose from.

I do prefer to find listening scripts within the context of the rest of a unit of work, and Avantage meets that preference. The listening material has been recorded using native speakers of a similar age to the Year 9 student. They speak at a 'sympathetic' speed, and there is no annoying music between the tasks. At the beginning of the book the listening tasks are quite short, becoming longer and more complex, as one would expect. Unfortunately, only the first tape of four was provided for review, but what I heard was certainly designed to motivate learning through successful accomplishment of tasks.

My one quibble would be the flashcards. Yes, they are colourful, apt, and produced on high quality card. BUT they are double-sided, with all the filing implications that implies – you know, the times when you can't find one card, only to discover it facing in the 'wrong' direction. So, nothing in this life is perfect!

A bonus is the set of colour game cards provided with the Resource and Assessment File. There is a board game version of the Tour de France, a Happy Families type game using clothing vocabulary, and a set of 'Fiches d'identité' to support rôle play work. They are produced on high quality card with a gloss finish, which I estimate will stand up to classroom use well.

Avantage 3 is intended to be suitable for a wide range of ability. From my study, it appears that this intention is amply fulfilled, in a manner which is flexible, relevant to the targeted age group, and very teacher-friendly. I'm looking forward to putting it to the ultimate test!

HELEN LONGMAN
West Leeds High School

Lire Davantage – Collection A. *Heinemann, November 1993. ISBN 0 435 3700 6. £75.00.*

Lire Davantage is an attractive, colourful reading pack with three copies of 16 different titles. Within this collection there are two distinct levels, 'niveau jaune', which has very short texts and basic sentence structure, progressing up to 'niveau bleu', with more unfamiliar language and slightly longer sentences. Each book is eight pages long and has an activities page usually at the end. The activities are varied; true/false questions, match the picture to the correct word/phrase, finding out facts from the text, etc. Teacher's notes also accompany the pack and these include the solutions to the activities which can be photocopied allowing pupils to check their work independently. There is, in addition, a photocopiable 'profile de lecture', which pupils can keep and record their thoughts on the books that they read.

The books are wide-ranging in content and in style of presentation including fiction (*Agent secret numéro neuf*), factual texts (*Onze inventions amusantes*), games, recipes, cartoons and poems and covering such themes as bullying, the environment, problems with parents amongst others. Some books are of a magazine type style with a mixture of texts based around a topic. There is a selected vocabulary at the bottom of each page which saves pupils the frustration of feeling that they have to look up every word they do not understand. The instructions for the activities are in French, too, but here no help is given with vocabulary I found it useful to draw up a glossary with the class for this in order to enable more autonomous work, as although much of the vocabulary is straightforward, pupils who attempt the activities want to feel sure that they are doing them correctly.

I used the books with a Year 7 class who welcomed the opportunity to choose a book themselves and seemed to enjoy reading them (a particular favourite was 'Fanatique du football'). Using an idea that our Modern Languages department had already developed for FL books in the library, I put a card in each book where pupils could write a short comment in French so that they could express their opinion publicly and read what others thought. The teacher's notes state that Lire Davantage is suitable for pupils aged 11–14. I'm not convinced that a Year 9 class would respond quite so well to this collection as I feel the books are aimed at a younger audience and the style and presentation would not suit the different level of maturity of 14 year olds. However I think this would be a useful complement to any Year 7/8 French course and a worthwhile resource in a Modern Languages Department.

LIESE NEELY
Hinchingbrooke School, Huntingdon

Autolire. Michael Buckby, Gwen Berwick, Marie-Héléne Knights, Laure Sirvin, Sue Hewer and Do Coyle. *Collins Educational. 1993. ISBN 0 00 320119 8. £125.00 + VAT*

Autolire is a CD-ROM containing 726 texts in French for use at Key Stage 4 or as a bridge to Year 12 work. The texts are classified according to the National Curriculum Areas of Experience A–F and are divided into *textes préparatoires* and *textes principaux*. The *textes préparatoires* present the vocabulary which occur in the *textes principaux*: difficult words are highlighted and, if clicked on with the mouse, will produce an immediate translation or hints on how to work out the meaning. The *textes principaux* are divided into three categories according to difficulty: the lowest level is suitable for Year 10 or bright Year 9 pupils, the highest is intended for bright Year 11 and Year 12 pupils. The language is appropriate to Key Stage 4 and there is a simple *'Aide'* in English to help the pupils if necessary. All the texts are authentic and most come from magazines produced for French teenagers. An introductory screen for each text provides a helpful list of key words and phrases from the text, which can equally be used for a post-reading resumé.

Autolire is not simply a library of texts, however, nor is it a resource which must be confined to a single computer. Each *texte préparatoire* has self-access exercises (many of which are specifically designed to develop strategies for reading), which pupils can complete before, during and after their reading of the text; texts can be saved on disk and used on other computers; there is an electronic dictionary which can be used at any point during the program; and most texts contain high quality pictures. (The manual suggests several ideas for exploiting the texts). Sound, a fabulous addition, is also available – the *textes préparatoires* can be heard as if spoken by a native speaker – but not all sound cards are compatible, and there are some technical problems.

It cannot be stressed too much that pupils find using the CD-ROM interesting and exciting. A text typed on to a computer screen has more appeal than the same text in a book; when it is accom-panied by sound, pictures, different screens, activities to complete as the pupils progress and an on-line electronic dic-tionary, the appeal is much greater. *Autolire*, used regularly, can involve otherwise reluctant pupils in learning French and give them a tremendous boost. Its use has to be carefully regulated, however, and reading records kept, if it is to be integrated into a department's everyday resources and not become merely peripheral – a shame and a waste, as *Autolire* is not cheap.

In short, *Autolire* can be a rich – and stimulating – resource in the Modern Languages department if its use is carefully planned and structured. It is available on 28 days inspection: enough time to explore the program and plan how to exploit it for class use, particularly if the school possesses only one computer equipped for CD-ROMs. It is an offer not to be refused!

HELEN WRIGHT
Reed's School

Serie Rouge. *Cambridge University Press. 1993-94. £2-95 each.*

Chère Lambert. Ann Swarbrick and Mary Swarbrick. *ISBN 0 521 44978 2.*

This is an exchange of letters in French and English between two teenagers Laura and Sandrine. The topics they write about range from humour, the forging of a note to a younger sister's teacher to ask for extra homework, to tragedy with the accidental death of a young friend.

Le Journal de Delphine. Monique Alcott. *ISBN 0 521 44979 0.* Written in the form of the diary of a teenage girl, the story includes most of the dramas common to girls of 14: love and family problems.

Menestel, le Tout Puissant. Marc Guiguin. *ISBN 0 521 44980 4.* A strange creature is carved on one of the desks at the back the classroom by Olivier and others, each contributing new features to the figure. Olivier discovers that his creature has amazing powers and has some fascinating adventures.

Des Roses Blanches pour Danielle, et autres histoires. Francine Rigoni and the team. *ISBN 0 521 44981 2.* The opening story of a teenage girl who has a premonition of her friend's death. She then sees her own grave in a dream . . . Other stories in the collection include a rescue, a stray dog and a poem about the doubtful pleasures of helping in the home.

Aventures et Passion: Contes et recits d'aujourd'hui. Ann Swarbrick and the team. *ISBN 0 521 44982 0.*

A collection of stories: love, murder and drugs.

Marco raconte . . . 13 histoires vraies. Marc Guiguin. *ISBN 0 521 44983 9.*

Stories from the War, Revolution, a French President and a self-made millionaire and many more. Strange stories all, but true.

This collection of readers, available separately, is aimed at teenage readers working in KS4, at National Curriculum levels 5–10. The subject matter covers their interests and so will provide excellent material for reading for pleasure.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

French for Finance and Business. Geoff Waywell, Mik Wisniewski and Tony Dacre *Published by Information Education Ltd, 1991 Pack containing Computer programme, 2 audiocassettes, business documentation pack (93 pp.) £199 + VAT Supplied by Information Education Ltd, 24 Enterprise Centre Bedford Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 4PZ*

French for Finance and Business consists of three components: a computer-aided language learning disc, two audio-cassettes and a pack of business documents. The authors recommend that the components be used in the above order, however, they can be exploited separately. The package is described by the publishers as *'an up-to-date self-learning multimedia course'* for students of finance and business and related subjects, at an advanced level. The course, which is written in French, has been designed, primarily, to provide information on specific aspects of French finance and business, and to enable students to acquire specialised business vocabulary.

The software programme, which runs on IBM compatible PCs, contains 10 chapters dealing with different ways of financing a company, different types of French companies and their status, types of service provided by French banks and the transformation of the French banking system, stock market operations and the basic principles of accounting. Each chapter follows the same pattern, displaying on screen a business glossary (French-English), with text followed by self-evaluating exercises with three levels of difficulty (intermediate, advanced, fluent) consisting of gap-filling and multiple choice questions. At the end of each chapter students can obtain a printout of their results. There are also open-ended essay questions relating to each chapter.

The main weakness of the programme is that it does not allow the user to break off and resume a chapter at a later stage by setting a bookmark. Therefore, having to start a chapter again in order to complete the exercises can be time-consuming and frustrating since each chapter can take up to 50 minutes to complete. The software does not provide any indication on how to obtain a print-out of the texts and glossary.

The instructions on how to run the software are clear and easy to follow but need to be proofread since they contain anglicisms such as: *'votre cours'* instead of *'cursus'*, *'pressez la touche'* instead of *'appuyez sur la touche'*, *'vous aurez la possibilité de deux tentatives'* instead of using *'la possibilité de'* with a verb and there are many more.

The purpose of the audio-tapes is, firstly, to *'reinforce the knowledge of business structures acquired from the software programme'* and secondly, *'to enable the user to practise his/her French orally'*. The cassettes consist of the same texts and glossary as the computer programme and in addition, contain dialogues recorded by native speakers. The dialogues are less monotonous than the texts and are about two old friends, Marie-Sabine and Jean-Michel, who meet and talk about their professional life. Marie-Sabine would like to start her own business, Jean-Michel who is a bank employee, provides her with the information she requires to set up her business. Each chapter is well structured and also contains questions followed by pauses allowing users to practise their aural comprehension and pronunciation. Unfortunately there are no scripts accompanying the audio-tapes

Finally, the business documentation pack which has been produced in conjunction with Enterprise in Higher Education, consists of photocopies of company reports, forms found in banks, financial advertisements, and material on the Paris Stock exchange together with specimens of business documentation.

Since this package claims to be *'a self-learning multimedia course'*, some guidelines and self-correcting activities could have been included in the pack of business documentation. The print quality of some of the documents in the pack could also be improved.

In conclusion, the course material is indeed informative and useful for the acquisition of specialised vocabulary but at £199 + VAT, it is rather expensive.

In my opinion the audio-tapes are the best component of the package since they provide good practice for note-taking for students who intend to follow business and accounting classes in a French speaking country or who simply would like to familiarise themselves with the French business world.

SABREA OUGHTON
University of Portsmouth

French means Business. *BBC Books. ISBN 0 563 36753 9 £35.00*

French means Business is an extremely comprehensive course specifically written for business people consisting of a text book plus three 75 minute cassettes full of recordings, which are quite clear, although collected on location. Some interviews were taken from the BBC television documentaries 'France means Business' – invaluable for background, it claims. The course is suitable for those who may have studied French for a year or two in the past, according to the Introduction, but I feel that the latter might well be a minimum without risking student demotivation.

French means Business aims to 'help you to talk about different aspects of business – from your job and your responsibilities to your company and its products'. In doing so, the 10 units of the book cover arriving in France, getting to a company building, presenting oneself and others, making phone calls, dealing with banks, chambers of commerce, local authorities, taking part in meetings, entertaining business contacts, applying for jobs and much, much more. Many skills are included: from simply making enquiries, using 'Minitel' and how to present opinions. Many other aspects of French business are made explicit through the vast array of listening and reading passages, such as how meetings are conducted, views on training and language provision and, more informatively, how to set up a business in the north of France.

Each unit follows much the same pattern: after an introduction there are several authentic pieces of reading or listening, each followed by a short section entitled 'Avez-vous compris?' where key points are listed for the learner to check the main points of the passage. Then an 'A vous!' section has a tremendous variety of exercises taking the form of true/false, completing gapped dialogues, putting a muddled dialogue into the correct order, working out patterns in language, question and answer and the usual role-play. Alongside are hints on how to learn, often in English, and 'Saviez-vous que . . . ?' details facts connected to the subject matter in French. There is also a 'Communications' section in most units with the aim of helping to 'practise and extend' some of the language met so far. The actual 'Grammaire' explains points clearly, although there is a more complete 'Summary' at the end. Following these sections 'A vous' allows varied practice on the specific function or language point being exemplified. The introduction claims that the grammar covered is not comprehensive, but the book manages to cover the majority of grammatical points and gives further reference to the use of the subjunctive' At the end of each unit useful related background material is presented in English in the form of 'Infos utiles'. That of Unit 10 is particularly apt for those needing to think on their feet – a list of 'breather' words in context – hein, quoi, bon, ben etc. With the authentic recordings such words are frequent as well as the occasional change of gender mid-stream or even mistakes, which are usually pointed out and explained afterwards. Answers to the exercises and tapescripts are contained at the end, along with a glossary.

The three tapes are clearly documented although some knowledge, which the textbook seems to assume such as numbers and the alphabet, is introduced on tape only. After dialogues on tape, there are recaps, chances for repetition and question and answer to aid comprehension. Occasionally, the learner is also urged to make notes and to write or present orally a short review of either the content or one's own relevant experience. The second half of the third tape contains further listening practice which is transcribed fully in the accompanying leaflet. These provide an opportunity for deeper insight into specific topics within the companies represented in the course itself. Although the textbook can be purchased on its own, the tapes add so much more than is indicated and, since the course is deemed appropriate for both independent and supported learning, the whole package as presented for review would seem to be the best option.

Covering a multitude of topics, *French means Business* is a well-presented course for the serious business person wishing to extend his knowledge of French within a specified area. Through this course, the French business world and its workings are investigated and made accessible to all. Although there are now many 'business' courses on the market, I believe that *French means Business* has enough of a different slant, while still remaining useful to keep it apart from the rest.

AUDREY FAIRGRIEVE
Kidlington

French for Leisure and Tourism Studies. *Hodder and Stoughton. ISBN 0 340 58739 3. £8.99*

French for Leisure and Tourism Studies, written by Marie-France Noel, Cecilia Nicholas and Vicky Davies, consists of a single volume and two cassettes (which were not supplied for review). Heralded as unique, 'it concerns the provision of service from the point of view of British leisure and tourism professionals'. Aimed at professionals or students in the tourism and leisure industries who are beginners or near beginners in French, it is designed primarily for tutorial use, but can also be used for self-study. In the former mode it is suggested that the 12 units should be completed over 60–70 hours.

Having personally seen many a non-English speaker struggle to be understood in this country, the aim of the course is praiseworthy: 'to avoid communication deadlocks and upgrade the overall standard of customer care in these industries by providing employees with the language competence necessary for successful communication with customers who do not speak English'. To this end, *French for Leisure and Tourism Studies* is considered as being 'essentially communicative and based on typical situations in which trainees would be expected to provide assistance to customers in the foreign language'. But is it?

The contents page shows a certain bias towards grammar: the general unit title is stated, then each situation is only described by the grammar it contains – perhaps not a very enticing introduction. Indeed, grammar seems to sneak to the fore in many units, perhaps unintentionally, but its presentation is quite formal in structure and this might not be in accordance with many learners needs or learning styles. The book itself is quite structured, with no breaks from a very distinct pattern throughout the 12 units, which centre around one particular section of tourism/leisure, such as 'au bed and breakfast', 'a l'office de tourisme', 'au parc d'attractions' etc. Within the unit there are three situations, each dealing with a different aspect, but the same order is followed throughout. The situation dialogue is preceded by the main vocabulary, which is also on the cassettes; an 'Explications' section follows where the grammatical points and idiomatic phrases are outlined; in most cases an 'Info' section then deals with cultural differences; then there is a 'Compréhension' section with exercises based on the context of the situation. This is either based on reading/listening with excellent authentic realia in the way of tourist brochures in French or English as the stimulus, or matching-up of words and pictures/symbols. Ultimately there is an 'Exercises' section with sentence completion, comparison of the tape with the written word, manipulation of a grammar point, question and answer among other types. In each case there is also a 'jeu de rôle' reiterating the main situation dialogue. These are rather heavily guided, with only some freer conversation towards the end. The 'Compréhension' and 'Exercises' sections contain a variety of exercise types and stimuli, but they are geared towards reading and listening with little possibility for oral production. At the end of the book there are four assignments, intended to be covered after every third unit. These take the form of a given scenario with four multi-skill exercises, but again there is less opportunity for speaking in French than might be desirable. Of course, this depends on the amount of supplementary exercises or materials used by the tutor; not all have the inclination or time, unfortunately.

Having said that, *French for Leisure and Tourism Studies* is a very interesting course offering French from a different viewpoint; one that is perhaps more useful to a great number of people learning the language today. It certainly fills a present gap in the market, although it remains to be seen whether employers or interested individuals can be encouraged to increase this important aspect of customer care.

AUDREY FAIRGRIEVE
Kidlington

French for Administration, Business and Commerce. Adrian C. Ritchie. *University of Wales Press. 1993. ISBN 0 7083 1178 4. £7.95 paperback.*

This English-French glossary is aimed at a wide audience 'student, businessman, journalist, politician and general reader' according to the introduction. Few people have a foot in all those camps so for the purposes of this review I have put myself in the position of a colleague wishing to explain aspects of contemporary British life to an employee of a Chamber of Commerce in Brittany.

Dr Ritchie has made use of quality French dailies as a source for his French texts. My helpful colleague might well choose to make use of the *Financial Times* as a source of information on current commercial and political life. Taking a few terms at random from that daily for late June 1994, I found that this glossary coped surprisingly well, considering its size (241 pages). There were clear and helpful examples for 'recession', 'quotas', 'sell-off', 'insolvency' and some 30 other terms which I plucked at random from the pink pages. Diligent searching inevitably produced words and expressions which one might have expected to see but were not included. There is for example no equivalent given for the English word 'standard' (as in BS 5750 or ISO 9000).

Looking at my own everyday work, I was curious to see if 'bid', 'tender' and 'outcome', for example, were included. They were.

This book will prove to be an easily accessible source of reference for anyone who has a wish to communicate in French on contemporary business and commercial topics.

H. S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

Negotiate in French and English. Pamela Sheppard and Benedicte Lapeyre. *Nicholas Brealey Publishing 1993. 144 pp. ISBN 1 85788 017 X. £9.99.*

This bilingual book, an adaptation of the work published under the title 'Négocier en anglais comme en français' is the work of two employees of the EU's training division in Brussels. It aims – successfully on the whole – to give its readers a chance to analyse and practise in context the type of language used in negotiating situations.

In negotiations between people of different mother tongues, well developed communication skills are essential. It is not sufficient to speak fluently and understand correctly; it is also important to avoid the misunderstandings which can arise from differences in culture and business philosophy.

The authors point to differences of behaviour on the superficial level of etiquette. Any attempt to summarise complex differences in value systems, manners and mannerisms is bound to be met with reservation by those with experience in the field. We are told, for example, that 'French Managers keep a distance from their subordinates and also from their peers. They are less likely than British counterparts to open their minds, much less their hearts, and to share problems'. Mmmm? The problem with well-intentioned generalisations of this kind is they might not always match the reader's experience. I have come across distant British managers and across French managers who do not match the stereotype.

Whilst this book was not designed with translation activities in mind, many of the texts could be used productively for that purpose, particularly at undergraduate level. The quotation above is rendered, 'Les directeurs français maintiennent une certaine distance avec leurs subordonnés et également avec leurs collègues immédiats. Ils sont moins enclins que leurs homologues britanniques à dire le fin fond de leur pensée . . .'

There are indeed major differences in business culture and etiquette between Britain and France and any negotiator with a good level of French would profit from this book before sitting down at the negotiating table.

H. S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

French: its Acquisition as a Second Language. Seán Devitt. *Authentik, Dublin: 1993. ISBN: 1 8711739 11 2.*

French: its Acquisition as a Second Language is a short study of how five young second language learners of different mother tongues (English, Polish, Cambodian) acquire French while living and attending primary school in Paris. The study is based on recordings with the children made over six months. The main body of the book (chapter 3) shows, through an analysis of the interview transcriptions, how the children's verbal system develops from two basic verb forms for all contexts through to a clearly distinguished *passé composé* for closed past events, while the unclosed past (*imparfait*) is still expressed by the two basic verb forms, apart from *était* and *avait*.

This book is the second in a series of French Language Guides, published by the same team that produces the admirable *Authentik* newspaper and that has also been responsible for a number of publications investigating and promoting learner autonomy. I thus asked myself as I read: how does this book relate to these issues? Series editor David Little sets the context in his foreword, where he states that the series aims to provide 'well informed and accessible introductions to the various kinds of knowledge that together make up language awareness'. Little argues that such knowledge 'is likely to provoke (*in learners*) reflection about the language they are learning, and reflection will help to consolidate their developing linguistic competence'.

The book, then, has been written not for specialist applied linguists, but to provide first teachers, and then presumably learners, with insight into the process of how French is acquired in the hope that this will bring about more inspired teaching and learning. The 'pocket book' format certainly underscores the book's accessibility, as does its clear style. Jargon is restricted to such necessary terms as 'Basilang' and 'Mesolang' to refer to the stages in the learners' linguistic development, and only the verb forms are transcribed in the phonetic alphabet, with a key provided in the Introduction.

Yet I am doubtful whether even my first year post-A level students on a BA in Applied Language would perceive the detail of chapters 2 and 3 as having direct relevance to their French learning. This book will however make ideal introductory reading when these same students take up a course in Second Language Acquisition.

For teachers however, the book offers a useful empirical study in the area of grammatical development, dominated all too often at present by methodological dogma. In chapter 5, Devitt draws some conclusions for the classroom: he urges, in particular, a better understanding of the nature of learner language. If it took the children studied here several months to build up their control over the *passé composé*, even though they had constant exposure to French and formal grammar lessons at school, perhaps we should not expect *our* learners to be able to use the passé composé correctly immediately after we have 'taught' and 'practised' it.

Devitt's study shows how control of this area builds up very gradually, through a series of approximations.

I felt disappointed that chapter 5 did not offer a more searching discussion of the problem of grammar in modern language teaching. Devitt seems to take a rather predictable communicative line:

> If lessons were organised around interesting content rather than around linguistic form learners would be more involved and would be likely to learn the language more readily. (p. 78)

Thirteen years after Stephen Krashen published his *Second Language Acquisition* and *Second Language Learning*, this is surely well worn stuff. Is it still helpful to oppose focus on form and focus on content? Isn't the whole point that we now need to ensure that our classroom learners, particularly at advanced level, *do* stop to reflect on linguistic form for the simple reason that they will probably not get enough exposure even in an ideal classroom to enable them to 'pick up' the constructions that will help them express themselves efficiently?

Interestingly, Devitt himself in chapter 2 provides what could be a lovely exercise in sensitising learners to why 'grammar' – in particular, changes to the verb to mark tense and aspect – is important. He takes La Fontaine's famous fable of the crow and the fox and shows how the message could be communicated at a very elementary level just by the sequencing of 'words', i.e. nouns and an all purpose verb forms:

(i) corbeau trouve fromage
(ii) corbeau mange fromage
(iii) renard arrive etc. (p. 5)

However, unless the speaker can indicate that the crow 'was eating' but didn't 'finish' eating the cheese, the dénouement of the story, where the fox steals the cheese, doesn't make any sense at all!

Part of the problem for classroom language learners is that 'grammar' doesn't seem to make sense. It is an area of apparently complex 'rules' and we rarely encourage learners to explore why a particular construction should exist in the language. We also rarely help learners understand that 'grammar' is not acquired overnight! Devitt's book contains what could be reassuring knowledge for learners. David Little in his foreword hopes that teachers 'will find ways of mediating its contents' to their learners: my only regret it that the book itself does not discuss ways in which this could be done. An interesting read, nevertheless . . .

ELSPETH BROADY
University of Brighton

Route Nationale Stage 3. Lawrence Briggs Bryan Goodman-Stephens and Paul Rogers. *Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd. 1994.*
Pupil's Book 0 17 439510 8. £7.25
Teacher's Resource File 0 17 439608 2 £16.99
Copymasters 0 17 439511 6 £49.99
Audio Cassette A 0 17 439609 0 £15 + VAT
B 0 17 439610 4 £15 + VAT
C 0 17 439611 2 £15 + VAT
Flashcards 0 17 439513 2 £37.50
Activity Box 0 17 439513 2 £65.99
Video Cassettes 0 17 439642 2 £106.47 + VAT
Video Notes 0 17 439663 5 £4.99
Assessment Pack 0 17 439519 1 £50

Route Nationale Stage 3 continues to pursue its road theme and provides, as have the previous two stages, a wide range of core and complimentary materials, differentiated at three levels: Route Touristique, Route Directe and Autoroute. The Teacher's File is full of ideas for exploiting the material. There is a games cupboard section as well as clearly set out guidance. Some courses have a Teacher's File which can be so complicated as to be confusing. Route Nationale's is straightforward and easy to follow.

There are eight units in the Pupil's Book: holidays, money and jobs, diet and food, the environment and its problems, travel and road safety, youth hostels and camping, personal relationships and one's 'look'. The body of each unit forms the core material while the complimentary material for independent learning is provided by the Entrée libre sections in the Pupil's Book and the Activity Box cards with their cassette.

Grammar is presented systematically in the Rappel boxes and reinforced by the Station Service and Code de la Route sections. New to Stage 3 are the 'A propos' explanations, in French, of individual grammar points.

The songs and poems continue as does the popular cartoon strip character Alphonse. These elements of the course encourage pupils to produce their own on related themes, particularly the poems. There is also some very well chosen reading for pleasure material. The pupil's book is cheerful and eyecatching and the flashcards are colourful and clearer than some in Stage 2. There are videos with worksheets to accompany the course as well.

The Assessment Pack provides a series of end-of-unit tests with an end-of-book test too. The test activities are in ascending order of difficulty within each skill and cover levels 2 to 5 of the National Curriculum, with a number of open ended activities provided. The rubrics are in French with a detachable glossary at the foot of the page. The Annual Summary Chart, with some easily effected modifications in the light of the Dearing Report, will help ease the burden of record keeping.

All in all, Nelson have produced a comprehensive provision to more than satisfy the needs of the busy languages teacher. We look forward to the publication next year of Stage 4 which will take our pupils through to their Key Stage 4 assessment.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Etoiles Stage 3. Gillian Taylor and David Edwards. *Longman. 1994.*
Etoiles 3 Evaluation Pack.
Student's Book, Memo Book, Extra! Cards, Teacher's and Assessment File, Departmental Resource File, Audio Cassettes and Le Café des Rêves Bande Dessinée. 0 582 22772 0A. £125.00 + £16.95 VAT.

Stage 3 of the Longman course Etoiles is designed for classes who have spent a year each on Etoiles 1 and 2 respectively while at the same time being a natural follow-on for classes who have taken two years over Stage 1. It is equally well suited to those who wish to begin the course at this point having used something different. The aim was to produce one course for all students, whatever their ability, and whatever course materials they have used before.

The Student's Book is exceptionally colourful and is full of interesting items. It's the sort of book you can browse through and stop every couple of pages when something catches your eye. This could be amazing facts about animals, space or celebrations in families of different faiths. There are a round the world walker, sports personalities and singers, an Antarctic base and life in the Sahara and an adventure in time travel.

Everyone follows the same core course so that nobody feels left out. The Teacher's and Assessment File is brim full of advice and ideas for exploiting the materials, outlining the correct procedures to follow: input, practice and diagnosis and, finally, differentiation. The File indicates pathways for three ability levels in each topic. Those needing revision and consolidation use the Memo Booklet, National Curriculum levels 1–3, those who are more confident use the Student's Book, levels 3–5, and the faster workers can then progress to the Extra! Cards, levels 5–8.

The Memo Booklet is accessible to low ability learners while avoiding patronising them. It stands a better chance than most of catching the attention of the less motivated pupils which most of us have in our classes. The Extra! Cards are exceptionally good quality and are very attractive to look at, with tasks which will interest and challenge the most able. The cassettes include similarly differentiated material. The Departmental Resource File contains photocopiable worksheets which are clear and well presented.

Most up to date courses have a video component. Etoiles has gone one better. Longman and the BBC have collaborated to produce Le Café des Rêves which is a gripping adventure story involving a group of young friends who live in Lille. These teenagers and their story appear on several occasions in the Student's Book and in other course materials. An absolute must is the Bande Dessinée of Le Café des Rêves. This is the story of the video told in strip cartoon form for students to read at their own pace, filling in any gaps they may have after watching the video. It is an exceptional resource for reading for pleasure.

It may be that you already use Etoiles, maybe you are still looking for a new course to adopt, maybe you are looking for a change; have a good look at Etoiles.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton.

MPR Schools: Euro-Tots. Pierrette Goletto. *Price and ISBN not given. From MPR Schools, 56a Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 3BS.*

This is a series of nine booklets designed for French language tuition for use in play groups and day nurseries. The booklets contain pages of drawings and text covering the topics of Christmas, the family, animals/farm, food, clothes, the geography of France, numbers, the time, days of the week, months, seasons, weather, colours, greetings and the body. One of the booklets covers the alphabet with each page devoted to a letter of the alphabet and a picture beginning with that letter. As in the rest of the booklets, the text in this alphabet booklet is in both French and English. Similar French and English words are illustrated such as banane/banana, cat/chat, uniform/uniforme, music/musique etc.

Some of the pages in the booklets are duplicated – one being hand-written and the other typewritten. I didn't quite see the purpose of this.

The gap-filling tasks where children are required to write in French about themselves are, in my experience of teaching four and five year olds, too high pitched for pre-school aged children.

In summary the booklets contain pages of pictures with the French and English next to it. In this respect, it's pretty basic. But if like me you are hopeless at drawing, these booklets are quite a useful bank of resources to dip into. The text in particular can be used with much older children.

JULIA MINHAS
Comberton Village College, Cambridgeshire.

Le Petit Trampoline S. Meyer-Dreux. *CLE International 1994. ISBN 209 0335114 Price not given.*

This is a pupil's text book, but without texts! A 60-hour course for seven year olds, conveniently divided into four themes, called 'Magazines' entitled 'A l'Ecole', 'A la Maison', 'En Promenade' and 'En Vacances'. Each magazine consists of 22 pages, 14 in full colour, either cartoon type drawings or photographs, with eight pages of monochrome 'jeux et activités' and composed of five sections (according to the publicity leaflet), 'Communication', 'Vocabulaire', 'Grammaire', 'Phonetique' and 'Fabrication-Jeux'. The pages are approx. A4 size and the pictures, which are lively and clear, cover a double, whole or half page. They have no vocabulary on them, but a few have numbers or alphabet letters. One page has some children's handwriting. 'Memo' is a cartoon cat who gives coded instructions throughout.

At the end of the book are many rhymes and songs, most of which were written expressly for the course and appear to cover, very appropriately, the intended vocabulary to be learnt. They help the children 'prend conscience du systeme phonique en chantant, récitant dansant, jouant'.

This is intended to be a fully interactive course with an oral approach. The 'Guide pédagogique' and the two 'cassettes collectives' seem to be an absolute necessity, since there is no indication of intended language development pattern in the pupil's book.

The vocabulary and structures and the themes, pictures, rhymes and songs would appeal to children of up to 11 years of age, but without listening to the cassettes it is difficult to comment on the suitability of the accompanying music.

A note to the publisher: A 'giant' picture book, or OHTs showing the same pictures, would be of help, particularly for children of low ability, who might find it difficult to concentrate on some of the busier pictures in the pupil's book.

MAVIS KERRIGAN
Tanner's Brook Junior School, Southampton

Esquisses Hexagonales. *AEB Pack: Ref EH5/1001/P £43.50 Jeunesse, Médias, Environnement (video/book). Pack: Ref EHL/2002 £43.50 Loisirs, Education, Criminalité (video/book). Available from: Publications Dept, AEB, Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XJ.*

Esquisses Hexagonales consists of two independent but complementary integrated video-print packs produced by the Associated Examining Board, and is in response to requests from teachers and business users for additional post-16 resources, following the AEB's successful 'Paris: Nouvelles Perspectives'.

The packs cover six of the most popular topic areas aimed at advanced post-16 students Youth Issues, the Media. The Environment, Sport and Leisure, Education and Training, and Crime and Violence. Each pack contains a video of approximately one hour and an A5 support book;. The video contains a mixture of long and short interviews and 'vox pop', filmed on location in France and Belgium. The user-friendly book is divided into clear sections containing suggestions on how to exploit the video, full transcript with lexical references and supporting notes as well as useful, up-to-date background information.

The video pack 'Jeunesse, Médias, Environnement' was reviewed by two teachers who both felt that overall the pack provided an excellent base resource, but as, one would expect, will require teacher time in order to exploit the material to the full. The video contains good, useable material in the form of the 'vox pops' and shorter interviews. The problem, as always, lies in the choice of focus within each wide topic area and indeed not surprisingly opinion may differ as to the relevance and interest value of some of the material selected e.g. in the 'Médias' section there is no mention of youth culture or TV (perhaps deliberately!) and interviews are male dominated; the 'Environnement' section does not address the more obvious concerns of young people. Some of the longer interviews – talking heads – do lack animation and instant appeal, yet the content remains wholly relevant to the topic in question.

The video clips are clearly sub-divided into segments, with a very useful segment guide in the book! thus allowing full flexibility for use by students working independently or with a teacher, and easily accommodating a 'non-linear' approach. Year 13 students would find the material both challenging and useful, since viewers are exposed to a wide variety of regional accents and communication strategies. The packs contain very worthwhile material for coursework such as a clear outline of major newspapers. The strength of the pack lies in the effective and essential book. The background notes are concise yet interestingly expressed, with useful ideas for follow up. For teachers using a topic-based approach in post-16 courses, the packs certainly provide a sound, flexible resource – surely a must and not only for AEB teachers!

DO COYLE
University of Nottingham

Eurolab Junior – Edition Française. *Revilo Language Cards, 1994.*
Set of 36 cassettes with Task Cards, Record Card and Transcript. £99.00.

Eurolab Junior is the latest in a long line of successful sets of materials from Revilo. Their *Eurolab French* was welcomed enthusiastically by language teachers, as will be their *Eurolab Junior*. When one considers that Revilo carried out careful research in the classroom and then produced a set of materials which fulfil the needs and hopes expressed by teachers and pupils it is hardly surprising that the materials work really well.

The package comprises 36 5-minute cassettes each with an accompanying task card, a record card which is pupil friendly and a transcript for convenience. These components together form a self access resource designed for autonomous listening practice in the KS3 classroom, for use with either walkmans or listening posts, or even for use at home. The material is easy to manage and the recordings are clear and uncluttered not in the least patronising with a total absence of silly voices and no misguided attempts at being 'trendy'. The simple instructions on the cards are in the target language and, since all the cards are identical in format, pupils are unlikely ever to be confused. Each card begins with an example which is recorded twice. The language is accessible to pupils, even those of low ability. Answer cards are clear and unambiguous to ease self marking. Because there is such a wide range of topics included there will be plenty to catch and hold the pupils' attention. The record card has space for the marks gained out of 10 for each task and so the pupils will be able to compare their scores with those gained previously.

As with all Revilo products, the collection needs no prior photocopying or preparation of worksheets and there is no marking to have to attend to afterwards. The materials are designed for ease and efficiency of use and so pupil autonomy in listening practice can be successfully achieved.

Eurolab Junior – Edition Française is a much needed resource, a real gem, at a very reasonable cost. It is well worth sending for a free sample cassette and card by telephoning 0962 714520. This will enable you to see the potential for its use in your classroom.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Worldly Wise Wordsearches. by Judith L. Marshall. *1994 (ISBN. not given). £3.95 + £1.50 p. and p. Available from: Quadrant (Darlington) Ltd, Cleveland Avenue, Darlington, County Durham DL3 7BB. Tel: 01325 465423.*

This book of wordsearches was first introduced at Eileen Holly's excellent 'Wheezes for Teachers' session at Language World '94. Available in French, German and Italian, the booklet contains 20 wordsearches on GCSE-related topics such as: L'an (days and months), les boissons, l'hôtel, le corps, les magasins, les passetemps, les salutations, la ville etc. Twenty items of vocabulary are hidden in the grid, and are listed beneath in the target language. Crosswords based on the same wordlists provide further revision of vocabulary, and, most usefully, a solution to each wordsearch is printed on a separate page. This is excellent for encouraging greater pupil autonomy – enabling them to check their own work.

The booklet is clearly set out and easy to use; however, it is rather flimsy and would be better spiral-bound. These puzzles are suitable for most age groups and the clear, uncluttered layout and answer sheets make them particularly appropriate for less able pupils at all levels.

My only criticism – and this is perhaps only a personal concern is that the puzzles do not check understanding of the vocabulary. I prefer to make my pupils work a little harder at wordsearches by giving them the wordlist in English or symbols, making them write in the French word and then look for it in the grid. However, this booklet gives excellent value for money. I would recommend it as it provides a ready-made, accessible set of vocabulary revision aids, rescuing teachers from the time-consuming and tedious task of wordsearch-setting.

KATHIE ELLIS
Rumney High School, Cardiff

Pagnol: La Gloire de mon père and Le Château de ma mère. David Coward. *Grant & Cutler 1993. ISBN 0 7293 0347 0. £4.50. Critical Guides to French Texts, 96.*

Works by Pagnol have been familiar to A level students for some time. Much loved in France, it is only in the last few years that his work has been brought to a wider public in this country through film versions of *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des Sources*. Coward's critical appreciation is therefore both timely and appreciated by a potentially large readership. He sets about his task in a businesslike way. After a short introduction on the genre of childhood recollections in general, he gives us four discrete sections on Pagnol as a chronicler of the historical reality of the early 1900s and secondly as an autobiographer. The third section deals with Pagnol as a *littérateur* and assesses the extent to which he massaged the facts of his childhood in order to suit his chosen literary form. Finally Coward deals with the question of the film versions of both books.

In chapters two and three the temptation of reducing Pagnol to a trite 'childhood is nicer than adulthood' is dismissed. For Coward the key to the books is to appreciate' the way in which Marcel, the young Pagnol, reaches an adult understanding of the world through repeated exposure to reality which encroaches ever more closely on his consciousness. The *revers de la médaille*, of course, is that as he acquires an adult understanding he simultaneously loses his innate capacity to interpret life, time and language in an intensely subjective way. This central theme is amply illustrated by short sections dealing with a specific aspect of life, for example Marcel and time, Marcel and other people, Marcel and imagination. Taken together, the two books clearly convey the the growing boy's drift towards full acceptance of generally-held values and his poignant realisation of the sense of loss that this brings.

The language of the book is straightforward and free of 'lit-crit speak'. We read (p. 48) 'Imagination is a fine thing but reality keeps breaking through.' This sums up memorably an important point and loses nothing through being expressed in an accessible way. It is a pity that such a clearly-written and perceptive guide should fizzle out with the dampest of squibs: the short glossary of Provençal terms does scant justice to the range and vigour of Pagnol's use of regional terms.

All in all, this is a readable and refreshing introduction to the two works. It is a worthy addition to Coward's earlier work on *L'Eau des Collines*.[1]

A. R. OATES
Trinity School, Croydon

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[1] see *Francophonie* no. 3, pp. 61–2.

France Today ed. J Fowler *et al. Hodder & Stoughton, 1993. 276 pp. ISBN 0 340 55752 4*

France Today seeks to present a broad picture of the main issues and developments affecting contemporary French society and politics. Each of the nine essays that make up the book covers a specific topic and is written by an academic with a special interest in that area. In many cases the recent, and sometimes not so recent, historical background to the present situation is outlined in some detail. The text is supported by a number of illustrations (the quality of reproduction of these is at times very poor) statistical tables and so on.

At its best this book is an exceedingly useful work of synthesis. The best essays are full of insight in their analysis and yet are thorough surveys of the key institutions and issues at play in an area. The chapters on education, the trade unions and the broadcasting media are good examples.

The book is less successful in the essays where contemporary France is presented as the largely implicit result of a set of historical developments with the result that space devoted to the present issues facing the country is limited. Occasionally the balance between description and analysis is a poor one with too little attempt to draw meaning out of the facts and statistics that are presented.

The choice of topics – Social structures, Political parties, Trades unions, Immigration, Foreign policy, Education, Religion, The Press, The Broadcasting media – gives the book an institutional focus and neglects some key areas of contemporary France. Analysis of the present economic situation is omitted, and problems such as those facing the welfare state are not adequately presented.

Despite its weaknesses the book remains a very rich source of information for anyone with an interest in the aspects listed.

KEVIN FIRTH
The Open University

France: Nation and Regions ed. M. Kelly and R. Böck. *A.S.M. & C.F. 1993. 263 pp. ISBN 0 854 3247 98*

Anyone familiar with conferences of the Association for the Study of Modern and Contemporary France will be aware of the great variety and quality of the papers that are presented. The 1992 conference in Southampton which dealt with the broad themes of regionalism and French nationalism and statehood, was no exception. This book publishes 28 of the papers that were presented at that conference.

The papers are grouped into three parts representing different aspects of the subject, the first being 'theoretical and historical perspectives' which is followed by 'political and economic perspectives'. The final part contains papers that treat 'issues in particular regions'.

It is only possible here to give an impression of the variety the book contains. There are papers dealing with Foucault's analysis of state power and decentralisation, with France and the decline of the nation state, with the role of culture in the emergence of ethnic movements and with the ways Vichy propaganda sought to mould national consciousness. There is also a paper looking at how provincial imagery and themes are used in the political writings of François Mitterrand to present an attachment to tradition and rural values with the aim of presenting a reassuring context for the presentation of radical policy.

There are papers dealing with aspects of regional economic development, transport, politics, and the role and style of the regional press and papers addressing issues in Brittany (3), Alsace, Lorraine, Corsica and others.

The breadth of topics covered in this book means it should be of interest to many involved in teaching aspects of contemporary French society. Whilst some of the papers are theoretical and specialist in nature, many of them are much more accessible to the general reader.

KEVIN FIRTH
The Open University

Appraisal for Language Teachers. Michael Pennington. *October 1993. ISBN 1 85234 532 2. £7.00.*

Managing the Modern Languages Classroom. Amanda Flint and Anna Lise Gordon. *October 1993. ISBN 1 85234509 8. £7.00.*

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Teaching and Learning Grammar. Alison Taylor. *March 1994. ISBN 1 85234 554 3. £5.00.*

These three books form part of the *Concepts* series, published by MGP in conjunction with ALL, and are intended to *'provide positive and constructive guidance for the classroom practitioner'* (Bob Powell). They combine theory with practice in an immediate, down-to-earth fashion which will be of practical use in the Modem Languages department.

Appraisal for Language Teachers (no. 2 in the series) is surprisingly interesting and stimulating, given the sometimes dry, theoretical or daunting nature of the subject. The book follows the process of appraisal from the initial necessary school decisions through focusing on the individual, agreeing the criteria for appraisal, gathering evidence, and the interviews themselves, to recording the outcome and planning for the future, and each chapter briefly presents the theory – what should happen and what you should know – together with realistic case studies and suggested exercises for individuals and groups which help to focus on the issues raised. The language used has no frills and the case studies, which, soap opera-like, follow three teachers through the appraisal process are so carefully prepared that every teacher is sure to find several aspects of these situations to which they can relate their own experiences. This a book for all teachers, not just Heads of Departments.

Managing the Modern Languages Classroom (no. 3 in the series) is written in the same straightforward style as *Appraisal for Language Teachers*, and is a book which encourages the teacher to pause, review what is happening in his/her classroom and take steps to plan and implement improvements in keeping with the demands of the National Curriculum. It breaks down the question sometimes uttered in despair, 'what can I do?' into practical stages and stresses the support which other teachers and resources can offer. It is a book to be read slowly and reflected upon if enduring and drastic change is to result, or selectively for encouragement by teachers who have a largely good classroom practice. The book contains a chapter on designing class activities which is concise but comprehensive – and linked to the National Curriculum. Many of the ideas could usefully be incorporated into a departmental scheme of work as well as being of use to an individual teacher.

Teaching and Learning Grammar is no. 4 in the series. Younger and older teachers alike are often at a loss as to how and to what extent they should present grammar to children learning a language, although many teachers have strong (and very different) views on the subject. This book starts from the premise that teaching styles will depend on an individual or a department and on the responsiveness of pupils, and seeks to provide sound practical guidance on grammar which establishes its relative importance as patterns which will help pupils to learn language, and suggests how it might be integrated into classroom activities in games, poetry, drama and songs (a list of suitable sources is provided), as well as through focused listening, reading and practice exercises. The brevity of this book (as of the other two books in the series reviewed here – 52 pages and 40 pages respectively) is to its advantage: in 28 A4 pages the reader is not swamped by ideas but rather stimulated by them – key headings and short paragraphs plant thoughts in the teacher's mind which can take root and grow into successful classroom practice.

These books are inexpensive, and as in some ways they are very personal books, aimed at the reader, they could usefully be owned by each teacher in a department, although it would be sufficient to give them a high profile in central department resources. All three books are extremely readable and are written in an approachable style. They can be read in an evening and yet will provoke ideas and strategies which will be long-lasting. They all contain photocopiable sheets – some for staff development, some for pupil use – and are to be thoroughly recommended.

HELEN WRIGHT
Reed 's School, Cobham

English Grammar for Students of French. Jacqueline Morton. *Olivia and Hill Press 1993 ISBN 0 934034 18 4 (available through European Schoolbooks). £6.95*

For those countless language teachers who despair of their pupils' lack of grammatical knowledge, the Olivia and Hill Press have produced a set of guides introducing points of grammar in English, with examples drawn from English, followed by (usually longer) examination of the same points in the context of the foreign language to be learned. In Jacqueline Morton's book for learners of French no prior grammatical knowledge at all is assumed, and the student is lead gently and carefully from the most basic points ('what is a noun?') to quite advanced aspects such as the use of the subjunctive, coaxed along by study hints ('you will need to memorise this . . . '), much cross-referencing, and helpful review exercises with answers provided.

The author has achieved a fairly successful compromise between thoroughness and clarity, although there is the occasional over-elaboration, where, for example, she insists on three forms of the present tense in English (simple, continuous and emphatic, when emphasis might more effectively have been covered as a separate item). Her use of French is inconsistent, too, as she introduces gender exclusively in English as a sort of compound biological and grammatical concept, whilst the definite article is presented with numerous French examples. British users may find the American spellings (color), terms (parentheses, movie) and references ($, Washington) mildly irritating.

This book is not going to cure all our frustrations. As a text book for learners it tries to cover too many levels and may be a little too abstract in its single-mindedly structural approach with no reference at all to communicative functions, but it could be a great help to teachers as a source of plentiful ready-made explanations and examples, and it does make us stop and think (do we ever really explain what we mean when we insist on the importance of 'agreement'?). The decision on when to use it – before a point of grammar is taught in French or after, or as remedial help if students continue to have difficulty – depends on the approach of the individual teacher, but it is certainly a useful resource if you are teaching at any level up to A Level.

IAN BAILLIE
University College, Salford

Allons! Series general editor Jeremy Higham. *L'Ensouleiado Software. 1993. £25.00.*

Allons! is a suite of three discs comprising 34 programs for KS3 pupils, suitable for beginners of all abilities. The discs provide practice in much of the basic vocabulary areas encountered in KS3: animals, transport, directions, buildings, colours, dates, numbers, seasons, weather, parts of the body, time, cafes, shops, weight, prices and money. One program helps the pupil to produce text which brings together the themes covered on that particular disc. Different levels on most of the programs are provided by adjusting the levels of support, usually in the form of prompts, for differentiated tasks.

The programmes are easy to use once some confusion over graphics is sorted out – cars and buses are not dissimilar.

The accompanying notes list the vocabulary required for each program which is very helpful. Sound, in the form of a jingle as a reward for success, is optional, the volume is adjustable.

Allons! is a useful program to have on hand in the KS3 classroom as years 7 and 8 would he able to complete the tasks at their various levels of difficulty.

Available for BBC, Acorn and Nimbus machines. Unfortunately not for IBM PC machines yet.

Voyage! Series general editor Jeremy Higham. *L'Ensouleiado Software. 1993. £25.00.*

This program is designed for KS4 pupils and is wholly in French. One of a set of ten groups of holidaymakers is allocated on a random basis to the user and the task is to plan a holiday for them.

The first disc offers a choice of destination, accommodation and excursions. If unsuitable accommodation is selected the computer will issue a warning that can be ignored if so wished. The second disc involves writing to the hotel or campsite to book the planned holiday. Three levels of difficulty are catered for by varying levels of support. The resulting letter can be printed after checking by the teacher. The teacher's notes usefully include details of the options available in excursions and accommodation. Other ideas for exploiting the information provided about the resorts are also in the teacher's file.

The program, centred around holiday planning would be a very worthwhile resource to have in the classroom. We particularly liked the letter writing facility with its different levels of prompt for the pupils.

Available for BBC, Acorn and Nimbus machines. Unfortunately not IBM PCs yet. L'Enouleiado Software can be contacted at: Old Brackenlands, Wigton, Cumbria. CA7 9LA, Tel: 0693 42224.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Studying and Working in France: A student Guide by Russell Cousins, Ron Hallmark and Ian Pickup. *Manchester University Press, 1994. 314 pp. £7.99. ISBN 0-7190-4220-8 paperback.*

If there is a certain feeling of *déjà lu* about this book the reader should not really be surprised, for the same authors published a book, reviewed in *Francophonie* No. 2 (December 1990), under the title of *A Student Guide to French Universities*. Indeed on the back cover of this latest publication laudatory extracts from the 1990 *Francophonie* review appear as though they were taken from a review of the latest reincarnation. Slightly naughty – though I am glad to say that the new book is, in fact, an excellent student support and, at £7.99, excellent value for money – no more than about 4 pints of beer when expressed in student currency.

So what in fact has happened? The Introduction is very frank. 'This *Guide* is a substantially revised, updated and expanded version of the authors' *Student Guide to French Universities*.' The original book catered for British students doing their year abroad in France. Now the writers have widened their market to cater for students from all anglophone countries, especially those from the USA and Australasia.

And it should not be thought that this expansion has in any way reduced the value of the book for British students. Not at all. This very up-to-date and wideranging review of French Higher Education is as useful as it ever was, being both theoretical and immensely practical. The early chapters cover the universities in some detail with what is probably uppermost in the diffident foreign student's mind, i.e. a desperate need for very solid advice on survival through the CROUS and other welfare services.

Given the number of universities in France it would be impossible to produce a guide to all centres of learning. As a result the authors concentrate on 25 main centres to give a guide to 'French Universities and their towns'. Usually 7 or 8 pages are accorded to each centre and each review covers the university itself (in some cases, the universities) and lists appropriate courses offered for language undergraduates and foreign students. All official *résidences universitaires* are listed, with the number of rooms and relevant addresses and telephone numbers. There are also details of private sector accommodation. Each town is then covered from the student interest point of view – sources of tourist information and leisure facilities. Health care, travel and emergency care are not omitted. Altogether a very comprehensive review though no one would agree with everything said about any particular town. Still, a useful bibliography at the end ensures that other views are not neglected.

Students who go to IUT and ESCAE from abroad may be led to feel that they have been somewhat slighted, though all these alternatives are explained in the section on the *Loi Savary* in the early part of the book. Those who are puzzled by such *sigles* will be delighted to find that there is a most comprehensive list in the 10 page glossary at the end. This is useful for *anyone* wanting the latest information on the French university system.

Finally it should be noted that the book now covers more than the universities since it has a substantial chapter on working in France. This is very helpful and will be of use to most students contemplating spending the year there.

Perhaps the book has lost a little of its clarity by increasing in size and range. In the former book the 'What to do before you go' section followed by 'What to do when you get there' were so very clear. Nevertheless any loss of immediate impact is amply compensated for by the wealth of information provided. I do not know of any book which even approaches this Guide for practicality and for clear solid information such as every student needs before going to France. It should be in every university and departmental library and no doubt will quickly be on every organising tutor's shelf, even when such tutors are able to take advantage of long established links with colleges well known to them through ERASMUS and other reciprocal arrangements.

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

C6

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Language World

31 March - 3 April 1995

University of York

Language World is the annual course/conference and exhibition of the Association for Language Learning, the UK professional association for language teachers in all sectors of education. It provides inservice training and information to support the teaching and learning of foreign languages at all levels.

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Gillian Shephard, Secretary of State for Education, will be a guest speaker

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(reduced rates for part-time and student teachers)

Notes for contributors

Contributions

The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French.

Articles written in French are particularly welcome

Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

a) Articles of about 3000 words.
b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (longer reviews or articles may be accepted),

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation

Articles should be submitted either typewritten or on computer disk (plus hard copy)

a) Typewritten: Type with double spacing. Typewriters or word processors should be set at 44 characters (the equivalent of the line length), as this will help the Editor plan the arrangement of the journal. Please send two copies of the article and keep one for yourself. One copy of the article should be 'clean' (with no corrections) to enable the printer to scan it. If there are any changes or corrections these should be made on the second copy.
b) Disk: Send 3½" or 5¼" disks (NB not Amstrad Cf2 disks) in double, single or high density formats. Most word processing packages are acceptable but if you have any query contact the ALL office. Also send in one hard copy of the article with the disk, and keep one for yourself.

Give your article one short title (not a title and a subtitle), and divide it up with brief subheadings.

Give full references for all sources quoted. Journal policy is to put these at the end of the article and not at the bottom of the page.

Illustrations

Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing

In order to be considered for including in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by 1st February and 1st August. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

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FRANCOPHONIE

December 1994 No. 10

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The French Journal of the Association for Language Learning

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La Villette: Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie

Following a meeting at the Science Museum in South Kensington in December 1994 to discuss, amongst other topics, languages and science - a cross-curricular approach, the ALL French Committee was enabled by a grant from the French Embassy and La Villette to take the Eurostar train from Waterloo to Paris Nord to investigate the possibilities of a school visit to La Villette, la Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie. It was felt that a well planned visit to Paris could be enhanced by careful preparation for a tour of la Cité des Sciences. With this in mind the members of the ALL National French Committee have put together the following suggestions.

La Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie is situated in the East of Paris and is most easily reached on the métro, the nearest station being Porte de la Villette. The official address of La Cité is **30 avenue Corentin, 75019 Paris**. Telephone for information on 010 33 1 40 05 80 00 or use Minitel 3615 Villette. Or reserve by FAX on 010 33 1 40 05 81 90.

For those travelling by Eurostar La Villette is approximately three and a half hours from Waterloo Station. Opening hours are from 10.00 to 18.00 Tuesdays to Sundays. However, La Géode, the special Imax cinema, is open until 21.00, so it is a good idea to book a session after the museum itself has closed (pre-booking is essential and very worthwhile as pupils are genuinely thrilled by it).

La Cité is housed in the shell of an abattoir, built in 1867 which finally closed for business in 1974. The museum opened in March 1986 and it is typical of modern Paris' self-image as it approaches the millenium. Unashamedly modern and futuristic, it is imposing, airy and spacious, made up of concrete, glass and light, featured in an ambitious and sometimes awe-inspiring building, with elevators leading to the various levels, providing views across the park to the Géode.

The building is approached by a series of processional, cathedral-like steps and, once inside, the visitor's eye is caught by the bookshop, with a wide selection of books, cassettes and posters for all levels and ages. The bookshop and the médiathèque can be visited without paying an entry fee into the museum.

Dotted around on the various levels are cafés, bistros and restaurants selling food at reasonable prices (approximately 35 francs for sandwiches/fast food and a drink). No school party need starve! Such stopping-off points are intermingled with the permanent exhibitions such as Mathematics, Sound and Communications, IT, Energy, Health, Stars and galaxies, Space, the Environment, the Aquarium and also the Planetarium, well worth visiting and best booked in advance or at least on arrival at the Cité. In addition to the permanent exhibitions there are temporary exhibitions scheduled to run for many months. Currently there is an exhibition on the history of packaging presented under the title of 'Emballe-moi'. It constitutes a fascinating mini-social history in itself.

Careful organisation will be required to decide on a route to the various exhibitions in between refreshment, Planetarium and 3D cinema breaks *(films en relief)* so that tired feet, brains and eyes can relax! The comfortable *fauteuils* of the Planetarium are highly recommended!

The Cité des Enfants is the most hands-on, user-friendly and bright of all the areas and though it is normally reserved for children aged 5 to 12 and their lucky parents or *accompagnateurs*, the intrepid ALL French

Committee thoroughly enjoyed an initiation into the wonders of anthills and transparent views of the human body. Most of this is interactive, as one member of the party noted as he keyed in his details into the concept keyboard computer to find out whether he had a double! This area is highly recommended for Special Needs groups who would be happily accepted over the age of 12.

It should be noted that teachers can visit la Villette free on Wednesdays during the school year. Such a pre-group visit would enable staff to plan the day well using the *formulaire de réservation* and obtaining in advance the excellent *Cité Docs*. This would permit a joint science/French project to take place with a good chance of all participants being able to understand and benefit.

Possibly the best way to visit La Villette is by means of a one-day visit woven into a more conventional Paris trip and there are many possibilities (see *Formules* below). If there are language problems, La Villette has headphones providing commentaries in English and many videos offer a choice of on-screen language. And again, so much is visual in impact that language at times is almost redundant. The great thing is that English pupils are given the opportunity of extending their knowledge of French in a scientific context – a*pprendre une langue vivante autrement*.

Cross-curricular opportunities at La Villette

Most teachers these days will acknowledge that foreign language study has a very important contribution to make to cross-curricular skills. In this way we can start to break down some of the artificial barriers which exist between traditional subject boundaries. At La Villette opportunities exist for creating projects which could incorporate learners' skills of observation, planning and research as well as independent work and problem-solving linked not only with the Science Department but also Humanities, Art and Design, technology and PSE.

A cross-curricular group of teachers interested in such a venture could consult the list of *'Cité Docs'* and the booklet *Le Guide des partenaires de l'éducation*, to find out what is currently available for immediate use. It is likely that *Cité Docs* would need some adapting. Publications range from *Vie et mort des étoiles, Mégalopolis des fourmis, Les cinq sens, Parler et chanter,* to *Tous Différents, Envoyer un message, Informatique, Faire un Enfant aujourd'hui.*

Because of the permanent exhibitions, links with science based work are immediately obvious:

L'environnment et son exploration
Produire et Consommer
Langages et Communications
L'Homme et la santé
La terre et l'univers

However, colleagues in the Art, Design and Technology Departments might be interested in:

L'informatique
Emballage
Cinéma Louis-Lumière
La Géode
Le Planétarium
L'Espace technologie

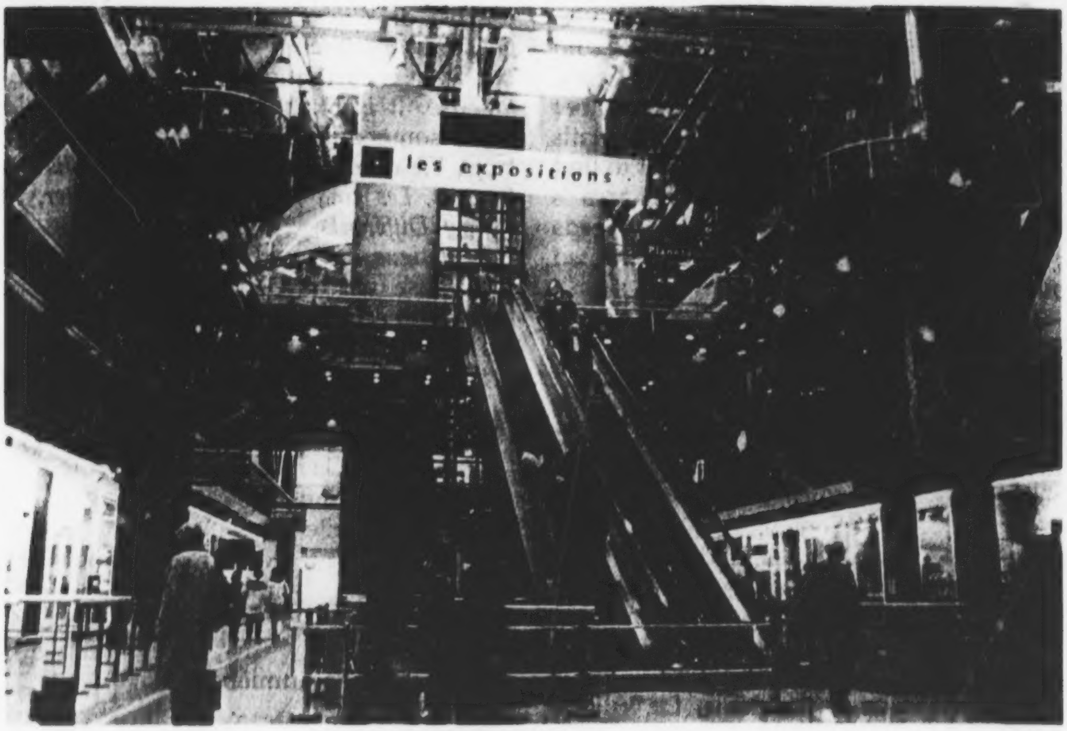
The building itself might be worthy of study as a converted abattoir!

The permanent exhibition based on optical illusions is worthy of special recommendation – plenty of 'fun' activities and hands-on – very much an 'incroyable mais vrai' approach. Geography colleagues might be interested, for example, in sections dealing with the solar system, the environment and canals. History teachers by the multi-lingual, multi-sensory experience of the Planetarium. The possibilities are endless. PSE links might centre on 'Me as a Person', 'Drugs' and the health exhibition.

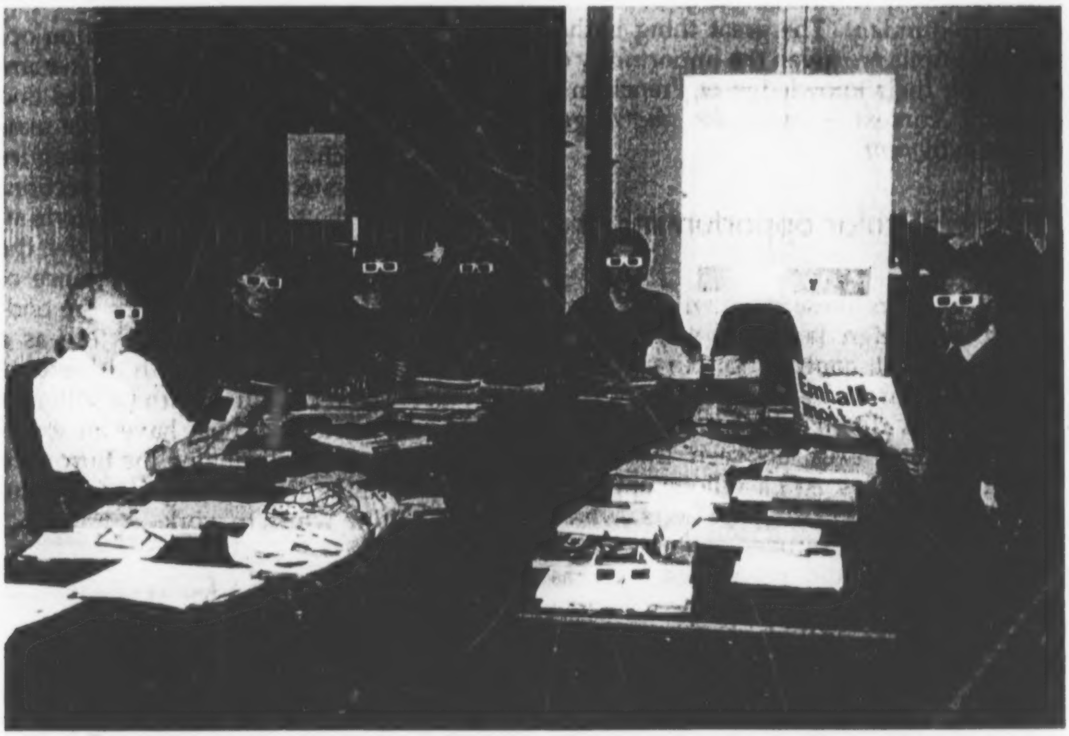
With close co-operation with La Villette's education service teachers have an excellent opportunity for bringing the European Dimension alive and creating a meaningful context within which to work.

Some practical tips for a visit

Price: *carte d'entrée aux expositions* - 25F to 30 July 1995. One free place for every 10 places paid for. By completing the *bulletin d'inscription*, plus your official school stamp, advance booking is possible and is


les expositions

Inside la Cité des Sciences


Emballe-moi

The French Committee in session at La Villette still recovering from the 'films en relief'.

indeed highly recommended.

The entrance for school parties (*Groupes*) is to the left of the main entrance.

Cloakroom and baggage repository: on the Ground Floor and free but all pupils must put their coats etc together on a large trolley – carefully remembering to take packed lunches with them!

Planetarium – interesting shows in clear French. Book on arrival. Some shows have English and French worksheets which it is a good idea to read beforehand.

Cinéma Louis Lumière. To ensure getting in to a show arrive 15 minutes before the start as seating is limited. Special glasses are issued.

To enter the Géode there is a supplement of 30 francs. One free place for 25 paying pupils.

Concessions are available only for pre-booked visits.

Teachers' packs are available in advance and on the day of the visit from: **Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, 30 avenue Cotentin, Carion, 75930 PARIS**. This documentation helps to choose which activities to focus on to gain the best educational value.

Teachers' Courses les Classes Villette Internationales are short 3–4 day courses for teachers who are planning a school visit to La Villette. There will be a 2 day session (6–9 July 1995) to enable teachers to prepare pupils for a Summer visit.

Accommodation The Cité provides a list of the *maisons internationales de la jeunesse* and *auberges de la jeunesse* and some hotel details, stressing that all listed places are totally independent of the Cité and should be approached directly for bookings.

Parking. There is a coach park for up to 40 coaches, the entrance to which is in boulevard Macdonald.

Formules

There are numerous possibilities for making the most of a visit. The following suggestions may help.

Formule 1. Arrange a three day trip to Paris for a medium to large group of younger children – perhaps even 7 to 9. This would be on a residential basis. For young children Eurostar is fast but a coach would be cheaper. A coach also enables the party leaders to avoid anxious journeys on the métro. Accommodation could be in a Centre Léo Lagrange. Centres of this kind are relatively cheap and they serve meals. For younger children it would be necessary to combine a visit to La Villette with a tour of the sights of Paris. The first day might be devoted to this – Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, not forgetting a walk along the Quais de la Seine – especially the part where all the pet shops are, for these are always a hit with younger children. Second day to La Villette.

AU REVOIR!
À BIENTÔT..

As emphasised elsewhere, very careful preparation for the visit is needed. It will be more beneficial to focus on the factual, scientific content of the exhibitions rather than on the linguistic side. Teachers should beware of relying on the bilingual wordlists and worksheets available as they somewhat unhelpfully list words such as *supernova* with its enlightening translation.

If a third day were available teachers might think of Euro-Disney or else Versailles. Alternatively a river trip by *bateau-mouche*, especially at night, goes down very well.

Formule 2. A longer stay for older – Key Stage 4 – children, either as a home to home exchange or in a hotel or residential centre. For pupils of this age a coach is not so necessary and the métro might well be used for travel in Paris – using a *carte orange*. A possible programme for such a visit might unfold as follows:

Day 1: travel out – evening *bateau-mouche* trip.
Day 2: Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Notre-Dame, Tuileries, Louvre.
Day 3: La Villette
Day 4: Versailles / Fontainebleau / Euro-Disney (selon le choix)
Day 5: Sacré-Coeur, Centre Pompidou or Musée d'Orsay, Catacombes etc
Day 6: Return journey.

For these older students it will still be necessary to have careful preparation for La Villette but the level of task can be higher – more specifically language based – great scope for 'Find the French for' type tasks and gap-filling, True or False questions, vocabulary building etc. This could integrate the language work very effectively with science and physical geography work to make a truly cross-curricular experience. Preparation is vital and on a five- day visit of this kind it might be possible to free one teacher to allow him/her a whole day or more to attend to preparation for the whole group.

Formule 3 for Sixth formers. Visits to all the well known museums can very usefully be linked to a visit to La Villette. It is not unknown for older pupils even to get out of Paris for a day – even as far as the Loire Valley. From genuine A level French candidates we should be able to expect quite a lot. Visits in pairs, for example requiring each pair to report back to the whole group later in their own words. Science students might well be expected to clarify some scientific concepts for non-scientists, though ideally one would hope to be accompanied by a science colleague on such a venture. It should be emphasised, however, that no specialist prior scientific knowledge is vital in order to appreciate what is on exhibition. Nonetheless a science colleague will help to make the whole visit so much more worthwhile.

Contributors to this article: Ian Bauckham, Anne Cambier, Do Coyle, Sue Hudson, Hilary Norris-Evans and Alan Smalley (Ed).

Photos by Chris Willan

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Nouvelles images, nouvelle culture?

Jacques Tarnero
Délégué adjoint aux
Affaires Scientifiques
(DAS), Cité des Sciences

The following article was originally presented as a lecture at the Science Museum, South Kensington, in December 1994.

L'actualité médiatique, les questions à la mode dans l'air du temps technologique et industriel de ces derniers mois, est pleine de mille bruits fascinants, aussi magiques que séducteurs. Une foule de mots et d'expressions nouvelles aussi intrigantes qu'ésotériques a occupé le champ de notre attention: il n'était question que d'autoroutes de la communication, d'images virtuelles, de machines interactives pour l'enseignement, d'objets nomades, de réseaux de communication tels qu'il sera désormais impossible de contempler un coucher de soleil dans le silence paisible d'une soirée d'été sans que votre téléphone cellulaire omette de vous rappeler aux funestes réalités du monde tel qu'il est et tel qu'il est sûrement en train de devenir. Déjà votre voisin dans l'autobus avec son walkman vissé sur sa tête émettait un grésillement aussi agaçant que ses mouvement de menton qui rythmaient la musique sortant de ses oreilles.

Soyez rassurés, le propos qui précède ne relève pas d'une allergie à un monde moderne hyper technicisé, car pour être moderne, le monde, sous nos latitudes est encore, supportable pour qui sait préserver son espace de création, de contemplation, de curiosité, de poésie. Et puis nous sommes à la fin d'un cycle, un siècle s'achève, un millénaire arrive bientôt à son terme. Quelque chose d'autre s'annonce et la question que l'on peut se poser, que l'on doit se poser est de se demander si Big Brother a tout prévu. En effet dans peu de temps vous regretterez ce gentil garçon au walkman, car vous ne connaissez pas encore le lookman, ce petit bijou de technologie miniature qui, grâce à un écran minuscule posé devant votre pupille vous permettra de regarder la télévision d'un oeil tout en vaquant à d'autres occupations. Imaginez un peu le futur quand chacun de vos yeux pourra regarder une chaîne différente de télévision. Imaginez quelques instants les relations entre les humains quand les sens qui nous permettent de communiquer avec autrui seront ramenés à des activités masturbatoires. L'ennui aura probablement disparu de la planète et avec elle la flânerie et le temps du rêve et de la pensée divagante. L'avenir radieux ne sera plus très loin, il n'y aura plus que quelques kilomètres à faire, mais sur une «autoroute de la communication» tout avance si vite...

Au début du XXème siècle c'est au nom de la science, au nom d'une prétention rationnelle et scientifique que les désordres du monde devaient être réduits. Au chaos du monde naturel la pensée du matérialisme scientifique proposait de substituer l'ordre de la raison. Un philosophe barbu avait écrit: «les philosophes n'ont fait qu'interpréter le monde, ce qu'il faut c'est le transformer». L'inégalité des hommes entre eux était censée disparaître, avec la disparition des constructions de cet ordre naturel et inégalitaire. Une grande réorganisation scientifique du monde mettait l'homme au centre de toute chose et la nature à son service. Grâce à ses bons soins, la science triomphante – il faudrait dire l'idéologie triomphante – faisait simultanément disparaître de la surface de la planète les diverses calamités qui l'assaillaient depuis des lustres. Un peu plus tard dans le siècle, d'autres grands réformateurs ont imaginé des projets symétriquement différents: au nom de la science il était question de hiérarchiser le genre humain et même d'éradiquer de la surface de la terre ceux qui étaient considérés par d'autres comme indignes de vivre.

On peut aujourd'hui mesurer et prendre le bilan de ces mouvements d'idées: c'est à une monde désenchanté que nous avons désormais à faire, tâtonnant entre scepticisme et consommations où l'art et la science restent encore parmi les plus sûrs refuges de l'esprit, de la création, du plaisir de découvrir des mondes inconnus et d'inventer de nouveaux mondes.

S'agit-il d'une entrée en matière d'un pessimisme tel qu'il confinerait à tenir des propos finalement très sceptiques? Le détournement de la science et de la démarche scientifique à des fins politiques, ou tout simplement l'idéologisation de la science dans un positivisme débridé ont fait plus de tort aux mérites de la science que toutes les critiques ou commentaires préférant le retour à l'état de nature. Le scientisme, le technicisme affichent une présomption d'innocence qui ne relève pas d'une pensée éclairée et c'est bien d'idéologie qu'il s'agit. L'excès en la matière, c'est à dire la croyance un peu naïve ou au contraire fanatique qui prétend répondre à toutes les questions que nous nous posons sur le sens des choses et la manière dont la terre tourne trouve son symétrique dans les courants de pensée qui préfèrent aujourd'hui le refuge dans les vertus de l'irrationnel.

Pourquoi donc partir d'aussi loin pour traiter de l'impact culturel de ce que l'on nomme les «nouvelles images»? Parce que l'air du temps, comme l'idéologie, a horreur du vide et que nous nous trouvons justement à un moment ou les grandes idéologies salvatrices ont disparu avec leur bilan et leur échec et que dans ce moment plein de vide et simultanément de quête de sens, la science et la technique risquent elles mêmes de servir d'idéologie de substitution. Symétriquement, et ceci n'est que le contrepoint du même phénomène, l'antiscience, la pensée magique, le goût des sciences occultes, le développement des sectes qui promettent le paradis, progressent d'une manière inquiétante. Ainsi le monde présent se trouve partagé entre deux pôles extrêmes: d'une part une confiance effrénée dans les progrès – on dira plutôt les développements, les avancées – des sciences, des techniques et de l'industrie censées tirer l'humanité d'une pente dangereuse et d'autre part un retour aux vertus de l'état de nature tel que le défend, sous nos latitudes, un courant de pensée écologiste radical. Cette idéologisation des applications de la science trouve aujourd'hui un point d'application fort dans le domaine qui nous importe, celui des nouvelles techniques de communication dont les nouvelles images sont l'illustration. N'est-ce pas le vice-président des États Unis d'Amérique, Al Gore, soucieux d'écologie, qui le premier a lancé l'idée de ces fameuses autoroutes de la communication?

Le développement des nouvelles techniques de communication, l'essor du multimédia, font de l'écran le totem des sociétés développées. Ce statut de fétiche n'est pas nouveau dans l'histoire des nouveaux objets et des fonctions symboliques qui leur sont attribuées. Ils jalonnent l'histoire des inventions, des mutations techniques qui participent de l'histoire humaine. Tentons quelques chemins de traverse qui sont autant d'approches indirectes. Il faut toujours tourner autour des places fortes avant de s'en emparer.

Un film de François Truffaut, «Farenheit 451» abordait déjà ce thème: dans un monde dirigé par une dictature d'experts technocrates, les livres doivent disparaître car ils recèlent cette matière dangereuse pour l'ordre en place, faite de la culture écrite de et la mémoire de cette culture, ce patrimoine de l'humanité nourri de la totalité des savoirs.

Dans un roman d'Umberto Ecco «Le Nom de la rose» il est question d'un livre proscrit par l'église, interdit parceque traitant du rire. Livre auquel personne ne doit avoir accès car ce dont il traite, le rire, subvertirait, selon les inquisiteurs, le rapport à Dieu. Le rire ramènerait le malin dans l'homme, en ferait le jouet des démons intimes, de la bestialité des instincts. Ce manuscrit imaginaire et unique faisait partie de ces trésors de savoir que les moines gardaient, protégeaient du regard et recopiaient dans ces abbayes à l'aube de la diffusion massive des textes et de l'écriture.

Cette étrange histoire métaphorique

posait une autre question. Qui du rire ou du livre était le plus menaçant? Qu'en est-il du statut de l'écrit pour tous ceux qui se posent en gardiens du Livre, pour ces pensées nées du Livre? Cette interrogation a sa place dans notre réflexion quand on sait aujourd'hui que, paradoxalement, c'est au nom d'une certaine conception du rapport au texte que d'autres livres sont jugés, condamnés, proscrits et que leurs auteurs sont menacés de mort. Salman Rushdie et à Taslima Nasreen sont condamnés à mort au nom d'une conception totalitaire de la chose écrite, de l'oeuvre littéraire. Que disent ceux qui les condamnent? Qu'il y a là une pensée blasphématoire exprimant un imaginaire insupportable. Or dans le même temps ce rejet de la création romanesque s'allie simultanément à un refus fondamental, constitutif de la représentation par l'image. Dans «la goutte d'or», un conte moral du romancier français Michel Tournier, ce thème apparaît. Il traite de la découverte du monde occidental, c'est-à-dire du monde dominé par les images, par un jeune berger du désert. En venant à Paris à la recherche de sa photo abusivement usurpée par une touriste il découvre un Occident prostitué à l'image. Il s'en échappera en découvrant la sagesse de la calligraphie. L'image serait asservissement. Le signe serait esprit. La lettre, l'art de la calligraphie célébrerait l'invisible par du visible spiritualisé alors que l'effigie, l'idole, l'icône seraient les déclinaisons de ces figures qui enchaînent l'esprit humain. La tyrannie de l'image, cet «opium de l'Occident», s'exercerait – il faut exprimer tout ceci au conditionnel – sous des formes qui vont de la sophistication technologique à la trivialité ou à la vulgarité des publicités qui font du corps dénudé de la femme un support publicitaire de consommation. C'est bien l'image, dans son essence, qui est perçue comme ne pouvant engendrer, selon ces nouveaux inquisiteurs, que pornographie et appétits vulgaires.

Cette forme radicale, caricaturale, du refus de l'image nous devons aussi la *penser*. Non pas pour la faire nôtre mais pour qu'elle nous incite à réfléchir, chez nous, à notre inflation d'images, à notre monde essentiellement peuplé d'images, à notre idolâtrie d'images, à notre désir d'hypnose. Qui de Big Brother, de Bill Gates, de l'Immam Khomeini, de Ted Turner, de Voltaire ou de Hollywood va dominer le monde? Qui a raison? Qui a tort? Qui émancipe? Qui asservit? Le conflit entre Orient et Occident ne se situe pas que dans le golfe persique autour d'enjeux en pétrodollars. Il détient aussi sa part symbolique et ce qui s'exprime dans ces détournements de la pensée née du signe et de la calligraphie n'est peut être que le symétrique caricatural de notre propre asservissement au «Dieu-image», fut elle nouvelle, numérisée, CDROMisée, digitalisée et comprimée.

Précisons les choses. Il n'est pas question ici de traiter de l'aspect industriel de ces innovations. Il n'est pas question de traiter du comment elles marchent, ni de détailler les différents objets qui les composent, mais plutôt d'essayer de réfléchir ensemble à la révolution ou plus simplement à la mutation culturelle qu'ils annoncent et qui se prépare. Quelles sont les questions que nous devons nous poser et celles auxquelles nous allons tenter de répondre?

– **Première question:** la culture du livre, l'écrit et la lecture sont-ils menacés par la culture de l'écran? Le livre est-il frappé d'obsolescence?

L'écrit n'est pas né avec Guttenberg et il est probable qu'il ne disparaîtra pas avec Mac Luhan. Pourquoi, brutalement, cette position résolument optimiste? Parce que depuis l'aube de l'humanité, depuis les peintures préhistoriques sur les parois des cavernes, ou les inscriptions sur des menhirs ou des galets jusqu'à l'écriture alphabétique actuelle en passant par les idéogrammes des diverses cultures, l'écrit représente six mille ans d'apprentissage de l'abstraction. Avec le développement de sa morphologie, de sa masse encéphalique et l'inscription dans ce cerveau de la mémoire de ses découvertes et de ses apprentissages c'est par l'écrit que l'homme de la préhistoire a affirmé, a signé son humanité. L'image, elle, relève d'un autre processus mental complémentaire à celui de l'écriture. Goethe disait: «le mot et l'image sont deux corrélations qui se cherchent éternellement». Il voyait que l'homme entretenait dans sa relation sensible et intellectuelle au monde, un couple de relations à la fois indissociables et spécifiques. Ce couple se trouve-t-il aujourd'hui menacé d'éclatement par un trop grand déséquilibre entre les deux termes qui le composent? Resituons les évolutions respectives de l'écrit et de l'image dans l'histoire de leur développement. N'y a-t-il pas tout simplement actuellement rattrapage par l'image du retard pris sur l'écrit depuis l'invention de l'imprimerie? Depuis cinq siècles Guttemberg détenait l'exclusivité de ce que l'on nomme communication. L'irruption du son, puis de l'image par la photographie, le cinéma, la télévision et la vidéo a brisé et renversé ce qui était jusqu'au début du siècle un monopole exclusif. Désormais d'autres langages concurrencent la langue des signes. Ils jouent dans un registre différent, l'image se reçoit, l'écrit se visite. L'image est donnée, l'écrit s'acquiert. L'image séduit ou indispose, elle fait appel à l'émotion du spectateur; l'écrit mobilise le libre arbitre et une attention volontaire du lecteur. On serait donc en droit de penser que la loi du marché alliée à la pente naturelle vers la facilité aurait induit une défaite radicale de l'écrit et du livre face à l'image sous toutes ses formes. On peut heureusement constater qu'il n'en est rien. On édite davantage, on publie davantage, on écrit davantage. Par contre, nous disent toutes les études, on lit moins, on lit différemment, on zappe sur l'écrit comme on change de chaîne à la télévision car paradoxalement l'image, ou plutôt l'écran, contribue à la fois à cette extension et à cette déformation de l'écrit et de la lecture. Prenons les sciences, toutes sciences confondues, si le livre reste la référence stable, on dira incontournable, aurons-nous encore besoin de lire des livres quand la totalité des savoirs nécessaires sera stockée dans des banques de données informatisées qu'il suffira d'interroger pour avoir accès à la connaissance? On peut se poser la question. Les livres appartiendront-ils au souvenir nostalgique des jouets désuets? Ceux qui entretenaient un autre rapport aux choses, faites de temps, de lenteur, de poésie; de choses qui avaient encore rapport à un autre ordre symbolique dans la représentation ou le rapport au monde? Prenons le roman. Lirons-nous des romans sur CDROM? Sans ce plaisir de tourner des pages de papier, de revenir en arrière pour lire et relire un merveilleux passage? Une question précède. Avons-nous besoin de lire des romans? Avons-nous besoin de lire tout court? S'agit-il de besoin de lire ou de désir de lire? Le besoin se satisfait, sûrement pas le désir. L'écriture et la lecture seraient ces codes d'accès au rêve et au désir que l'image ne saurait combler. Le langage écrit dans ce qu'il a d'équivoque, de trouble, d'ambivalent, de non-figuratif est la voie d'accès de l'imaginaire et de la création. Celle qui divague, investigue et cherche, sans peut-être savoir ce qu'elle cherche et encore moins ce qu'elle va trouver. Pour ne prendre qu'un seul auteur il suffirait de pasticher le plus prestigieux d'entre tous, William Shakespeare, car il a tout compris de l'âme humaine et a écrit sur elle des lettres d'éternité. «To be written or not to be written» telle est bien la question. Celle qui demeure puisqu'elle reprend les injonctions, gravées dans la pierre, de Dieu aux hommes. Dans l'histoire des civilisations, les fondements, les mythes, les romans des origines, l'Iliade et l'Odyssée, les récits sacrés de l'Inde arrivent par le récit et par la transmission écrite. A la différence de Pharaon qui n'est pas scribe mais qui dit le droit, qui dit ce qui doit être, la Loi ultérieure s'est exprimée par l'écrit pour que le peuple la connaisse et puisse la révérer. Désormais c'est l'écrit qui fixe la Loi des hommes, c'est à dire le texte fondateur et nous savons bien qu'aucune image ne saurait s'y substituer.

– **Deuxième question:** l'humanité va-t-elle vivre désormais par écrans interposés? Sommes-nous à un moment de mutation culturelle à l'échelle de la découverte de l'imprimerie. Y a-t-il risque de voir l'humanité sous hypnose, sous *overdose* d'images. N'y a-t-il pas risque, par la nature et l'amplitude de la révolution présente, de réduire notre capacité critique? En d'autres termes la multiplication des images donne-t-elle à voir *et* à penser?

Nous devons préciser la question. Cette *révolution médiatique* supposée est elle de nature toute différente des grands moments de mutation qui l'ont précédée? Comment pèse-t-elle sur les autres transformations du monde contemporain? Depuis une cinquantaine d'années mais surtout depuis une vingtaine d'années nous assistons aux croisements et aux fécondations réciproques de l'électronique, de l'informatique et des moyens de la vidéo. Ces nouvelles technologies permettent de projeter des images sur la totalité du globe terrestre, et au delà, simultanément à des milliards d'individus. Nous voyons au moment même où les événements se produisent, la révolution roumaine et le vrai-faux massacre de Timisoara, la signature de la paix entre Palestiniens et Israéliens, la tentative de putsch contre Gorbatchev et la marée noire en Sibérie. Nous sommes horrifiés une semaine par le génocide des Tutsi par les Hutu et la semaine suivante nous sommes émus par notre bon coeur et les opérations de secours au Rwanda. Un mois plus tard le Rwanda a sombré dans les oubliettes de la mémoire médiatique. L'actualité médiatique française nous apprend même que des photos d'information ont été aisément manipulées, trafiquées grace à la numérisation des images transformant des jeunes d'origine maghrébine en intégristes musulmans par l'ajout, fictif, sur l'image, de barbes islamo-virtuelles! Nous avons bien assisté au débarquement des marines au Koweit mais nous n'avons rien vu de la plus médiatique des guerres, celle du Golfe, et on en vient à se demander si ça n'est pas la télévision qui suscite l'actualité afin de produire les images qui lui conviennent. A quand des actualités virtuelles simulant pour les besoins de l'audimat, des vraies-fausses images d'une actualité sortie de l'imagination du journaliste quand on sait que la réalité est parfois plus dramatique ou plus drôle que la fiction?

Cette globalisation mondiale des canaux d'information n'est pas opérante uniquement dans le seul domaine de la circulation d'images entre de rédactions de par le monde. Le commerce international, la gestion de la répartition mondiale des zones de production et leur organisation fonctionne autour de terminaux d'ordinateurs, tout comme les marchés financiers qui lui sont liés. Le fameux réseau *internet* qui fait brutalement couler autant d'encre dans notre hexagone, constitue la matrice de cette globalisation des nouveaux modes d'échanges. Si Phineas Fogg avait connu *internet* le tour du monde n'aurait sûrement pas duré 80 jours, mais nous aurions tellement perdu au change...Les uns voyagent dans le temps et l'espace en quelques secondes mais les autres, au Sud en général, stagnent ou régressent dans le temps et l'espace à la mesure du développement des autres, du Nord. Nous devons aussi avoir cette dimension la des choses à l'esprit, il y a un gouffre qui se creuse d'autant plus rapidement entre nord et sud que progressent ces nouvelles technologies. L'accélération de leur développement pose simultanément la question du pouvoir, de la propriété de ces moyens, du partage de ces savoirs. La globalisation des activités humaines et une réalité dont la maîtrise échappe, dans sa quasi totalité, aux usagers, aux consommateurs, aux sous-citoyens qui peuplent quatre cinquième de la planète. Ainsi se posent, et tout autant sous nos latitudes plus tempérées, où l'individualisme et la concurrence règnent sans partage, les questions liées à la démocratisation, à la transmission des savoirs, aux questions d'éthique, bien que ce terme ait été vidé de sa substance par un usage abusif, posées par ces nouvelles technologies.

Reprenons la question: qu'en est-il de l'impact culturel – est-ce seulement de culture qu'il s'agit – des technologies regroupées autour de l'image. Laissons d'abord la parole à l'un des meilleurs observateurs français de ces nouveaux media, Paul Virilio, qui est l'auteur de nombreux ouvrages problématisant ce qu'il nomme la machine de vision. Il prend un détour, et pas des moindres, et voit dans le succès électoral de Sylvio Berlusconi en Italie un signe des temps et un symptôme: «la victoire du coup d'État médiatique», citant Mussolini lors de l'inauguration de Cinecitta: «la caméra est l'arme la plus forte», Paul Virilio considère que le phénomène n'a rien de *conjoncturel* mais s'affirme bien comme l'effet d'une mutation *structurelle* au sein de nos sociétés, par le poids acquis des nouveaux systèmes d'image, au sein du système politique qui la régit. Poursuivons l'analyse. En Italie, le chef d'une entreprise multinationale de média prend le controle des media puis prend le pouvoir politique à un moment de discrédit total de la classe politique, discrédit dû largement à l'exhibition, à la révélation médiatique de la corruption de cette classe politique. Or un homme politique de l'ancien système corrompu, Betino Craxi, est intimement lié à celui qui s'est présenté comme le monsieur Renouveau de la démocratie italienne. «Forza Italia», «En avant l'Italie!», puisque tel était le mot d'ordre de Sylvio Berlusconi, était l'aboutissement paradoxal des opérations «Mani pulite», «mains propres».

Comment donc penser ce paradoxe? Par quelle opération magique les électeurs n'ont-ils pas su voir, reconnaître la présence de l'ancien derrière le nouveau? Quel tour de passe-passe a permis cet effacement? Citons Virilio: «L'écran c'est l'oubli, l'écrit c'est la mémoire... En gouvernant l'image à travers ses chaînes de télévision, Berlusconi gouverne l'industrialisation de l'oubli. Telle est la télécratie. Pour la première fois un spot politique présentait le pays de manière touristique, comme si on avait oublié le territoire, le paysage, la réalité de la patrie.» «La puissance technologique de l'image est devenue telle que la démocratie est menacée par la télécratie. La démocratie cathodique est le grand problème politique de demain...Le livre et la mémoire fonctionnent ensemble. L'écran et l'oubli de même. La parole et l'écrit sont le fondement du politique et de la démocratie c'est-à-dire de la mémoire de la société.»

Prenons un autre exemple qui est aussi situé dans l'actualité. On a fréquemment dit qu'Auschwitz n'aurait jamais pu avoir lieu si la télévision avait pu en rapporter les horreurs. On sait que c'est parce que la guerre du Viet Nam était présente dans tous les foyers américains à 20 heures que l'opinion publique américaine a fortement pesé sur la politique de son gouvernement. A l'époque les images n'avaient pas encore atteint le niveau inflationnel qui est celui d'aujourd'hui. Aujourd'hui les images nous font naviguer d'un archipel d'horreurs à l'autre, du Rwanda à la Bosnie en passant par la Somalie avec un effet de saturation tel que le reflet filtré des images du monde rend encore plus confus, inintelligible, banal et normal un chaos qui nécessiterait au contraire une pédagogie de la retenue, un antidote à la frénésie. Désormais cet oeil supplémentaire qui était l'objectif de la caméra, ce troisième oeil qui aurait dû nous permettre une plus grande intelligence du monde nous a transformé en cyclope. Nous n'avons plus qu'un seul oeil, celui de la télévision, et celle-ci loin de nous libérer nous hypnotise, nous asservit, rabote nos capacités critiques. Nous sommes entrés dans l'ère de la télécratie, celle où l'opinion publique est réduite à l'opinion des sondages.

Changeons d'objet.

– **Troisième question:** A l'audimat de nos valeurs éducatives, les parts de marché acquises par les nouvelles «technologies de l'intelligence» développeront-elles de plus grandes vertus? Ces technologies de l'intelligence quelles sont-elles? Il s'agit essentiellement de l'introduction dans les véhicules de communication, dans les langages nouveaux de ce que l'on nomme les «hypermedia». S'il faut hélas user de nouveaux signifiants pour nommer des objets ou des concepts nouveaux, il est aussi nécessaire de veiller à se prémunir tout pédantisme qui consisterait à affirmer une modernité par l'abus d'un métalangage branché-technologique. Le charabia de la «vidéosphère», même numérisé, reste du charabia.

Les nouvelles technologies nées des croisements de l'informatique et nouveaux moyens télévisuels peuvent-elles développer nos potentialités imaginatives et créatrices, peuvent elles changer notre rapport au travail ou au contraire réduire le champ de l'imaginaire? S'agit-il seulement d'un nouveau saut technologique, produisant de nouveaux outils, élargissant la panoplie des moyens de comprendre, de communiquer et de travailler?

Les réponses à ces questions multiples semblent ici autoriser des réponses positives. Comme tout objet nouveau, comme toute technologie nouvelle, celles-ci jouissent de la présomption d'innocence. Nous sentons bien qu'il y a là quelque chose de neuf, de considérable qui participe du domaine de la vie de l'esprit, du fonctionnement psychique, de la pensée, d'une extension imaginative dans le domaine de la pensée, donc, au bout de la chaîne, de la culture.

Écouter, regarder, revient à se construire. Lire et écrire ont accéléré un processus d'artificialisation de la mémoire qui a sans doute commencé avec les mutations de l'homme de la préhistoire passant de l'outil au signe. Cette inscription dans la mémoire est demeurée comme un enregistrement transmis de génération en génération. L'écriture, l'évolution des systèmes de signes destinés à communiquer, a fait surgir des dispositifs psychiques qui ont pris le pas sur ceux qui déterminaient les savoirs narratifs et rituels des sociétés orales. C'est donc bien l'écrit qui a su imposer un code universel une structuration cognitive commune. On sait que les premiers textes ne séparaient pas les mots. Ce n'est que progressivement que furent inventés les coupures, les blancs, les paragraphes, la ponctuation. Les mutimedia interactifs ne feront que poursuivre ces processus d'artificialisation de la communication écrite à ceci près que la numérisation va introduire une révolution: ce n'est plus le lecteur qui suit le texte mais le texte qui suit le lecteur. D'autre part l'écriture et la lecture changent de rôle. Il y a même une interchangeabilité des rôles et des fonctions. Devant l'écran de votre ordinateur la lecture est aussi une écriture potentielle. Ces dispositifs nouveaux, largement possibles grâce aux développements de l'informatique, à la numérisation ont simultanément déterritorialisé le texte. L'écrit se trouve dépossédé de son territoire habituel, le voilà sans bornes sans les frontières de la page. La page s'efface. La page de la pierre de Rosette, de la glaise de Sumer ou des granits de Carnac. La vague numérique va la submerger. Jusqu'à ce jour l'humanité a pensé à travers cette page, elle a produit du sens à travers ce support papier, granit, argile. Quelle est donc la révolution présente? C'est peut-être grâce à l'interactivité entre le *texte* et le lecteur que notre pensée va désormais s'élaborer. Nous allons demander au texte de *nous faire penser*. Qu'est-ce que cela veut dire? L'alphabet, voyelles et consonnes est d'abord un système de transcription du son. Par contre les idéogrammes, l'écriture chinoise, pour être une transcription de la pensée n'est pas un enregistrement du son de nos paroles. Les mathématiques sont aussi un mode d'écriture indépendante des langues. Ces systèmes de signes ont été imaginés par rapport à des supports immobiles, fixes. Les média nouveaux, CDROM, CDI, fonctionnent jusqu'à présent dans une navigation pensée à partir de ces systèmes de signes. Ces nouveaux modes de transmission sont récents, 10 ans, 15 ans! Ce qui est peu de chose quand on pense aux milliers d'années d'élaboration de l'écrit. Désormais la mutation est en marche accélérée. La PAO, la CAO déploie une image, des images dynamiques qui sont autant de simulation actives pour l'architecte, le biologiste, le mathématicien. Le numérique ne transcrit plus le son mais le concept, le modèle mental. Le support n'est plus passif en face de l'auteur, il devient actif. Le support propose des scénario tout comme dans les jeux vidéo ou comme dans ces parties d'échec jouées contre un ordinateur. Il n'y a pas que simulation, il y a simultanément stimulation réciproque de l'esprit. Nous nous trouvons donc bien face à des inconnues, des mondes de langages inconnus ou encore inexplorés et rien ne serait pire pour notre intelligence que de laisser ces univers aux seuls techniciens, aux marchands ou aux experts militaires. Les humanistes, les philosophes, les écrivains devraient y regarder à deux fois avant de rejeter en bloc, par technophobie, ces outils nouveaux. Il importerait davantage de les domestiquer à de bonnes fins plutôt que de les diaboliser. Il s'agit bien d'anticiper une situation pour nous prévenir d'un mauvais «meilleur des mondes». Je le disais à propos de la télévision. Guttenberg n'a pas encore tout perdu et Mac Luhan avait déjà tiré le signal d'alarme devant le totalitarisme de l'image. Ce n'est pas l'outil qui est en cause mais bien l'usage qui en a été fait. Ici les choses sont différentes, il s'agit d'un autre rapport à l'écriture *donc* d'un autre rapport à la pensée. Il aura à peu près fallu 10 000 ans pour que l'on passe de la transmission orale à la bibliothèque encyclopédique. Nous entrons dans un autre monde où le texte, le livre, n'existe plus en tant qu'objet circonscrit mais éparpillé dans les mémoires informatiques des réseaux électroniques de communication dont le fameux INTERNET donne la préfiguration. Ce *cyberspace*, le néologisme est de Pierre Lévy, pourrait préfigurer, dans un monde plus sympathique, un accès plus démocratique à la connaissance et aux savoirs, une participation des citoyens à la vie de la Cité, une autonomie active des individus et non pas une communauté passive de consommateurs d'images. Mais nous sommes ici dans le domaine de la fiction, de l'utopie et l'histoire en a déjà tiré quelques leçons.

Il reste une **quatrième question** qui est étroitement liée à la précédente, parce que déduite elle aussi des développements conjugués de l'informatique et de l'image numérique. Les images virtuelles vont-elles changer notre relation au monde, notre rapport au réel et à sa perception? Vont-elles permettre de concevoir de nouveaux procédés de fabrication, d'inventer de nouvelles configurations dans les sciences ou dans l'expression artistique?

Au train où vont les choses, à ce rythme accéléré du développement des savoirs et des moyens de savoir allié à la modification désormais possible de la nature intime des choses, de la matière, du vivant, se pose la question de l'investigation du réel. S'agit-il encore du réel ou bien n'est ce pas sur une chimérisation du réel que l'investigation scientifique se penche. Le généticien des temps futurs travaillera-t-il encore sur de l'humain ou sur un solde d'humanité mutante? L'ingénieur travaillera-t-il sur les matériaux de la terre ou sur des artéfacts qui n'ont plus rien à voir avec la matière issue de la nature? Mais que restera-t-il de la nature dans ce que nous en percevrons, ou plutôt ce que nous croirons voir d'elle? Ce que nous percevrons comme du réel sera-t-il encore du réel ou de l'artificiel, du chimérique? Que reste-t-il du corps propre quand le génie médical, la prothétisation du vivant, le génie génétique, la chirurgie esthétique, les drogues psychotropes auront modifié non seulement le corps mais l'âme des individus? Un «réel» virtualisé, transfiguré par les artifices de la technique méritera-t-il encore la dénomination de «réel»?

Personne aujourd'hui ne peut prétendre répondre à ces questions tant les développements enchevêtrés des sciences et des techniques avancent plus vite que notre capacité à les intégrer et à les penser. Qui peut prétendre encore détenir non seulement la connaissance mais les moyens d'appréciation de cette connaissance? Au XVIIIème siècle l'honnête homme pouvait encore prétendre posséder la totalité des savoirs de son temps. Les encyclopédistes pouvaient croire les avoir rassemblés dans leur prodigieux thésaurus des connaissances. Ce moment des «lumières», ce moment un peu fou, inventeur des utopies émancipatrices semble bien révolu. Nous en «savons» sans doute beaucoup plus, infiniment plus sur le vivant, sur la matière, sur l'univers, sur l'infiniment grand et l'infiniment petit mais le savoir du savant moderne s'est déplacé. Sans sa prothèse informatique la mémoire du savant de la fin du XXième siècle ne pourrait restituer que les produits aboutis d'une accumulation des connaissances des vingt siècles écoulés. Et encore! Sa connaissance des galaxies lointaines ou bien celle de l'intimité génétique de l'homme est désormais construite sur l'addition des connaissances, des savoirs patiemment enrichis à la manière d'un capital d'argent qui accumule des intérêts au fil du temps. Nos savoirs actuels en sont les dividendes. Comment penser cette prodigieuse histoire au prisme des développements présents des outils de communication et de connaissance? Aurons-nous encore les moyens de penser, de conceptualiser, de juger, de sélectionner avec un imaginaire réduit aux dimensions d'une mémoire soumise à la puissance sélective des ordinateurs?

Comment esquisser une conclusion? Vers quoi allons-nous? Vers un univers de cauchemar, celui de «Farenheit 451», celui de «Blade runner» ou bien celui des peurs millénaristes. Ou au contraire vers un monde meilleur qui aura su tirer le meilleur parti de ces fabuleuses machines. Le «meilleur des mondes» d'Huxley pourrait alors être repensé. Gardons-nous bien de porter un jugement prémonitoire, mais une mise en garde du philosophe Alain Finkielkraut s'impose: «quand l'écran se fait total, il fait écran au monde».

On dira qu'il appartient d'abord aux citoyens éduqués et informés de choisir.

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Directions 2000: CD-ROM for French learners

Elaine Pawling
University of Sheffield

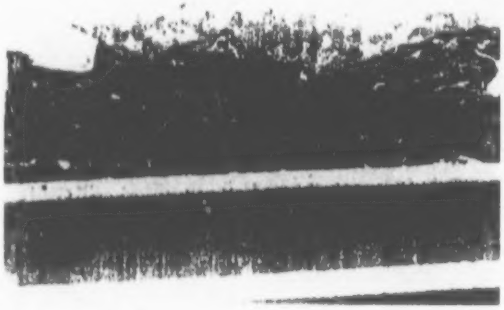
Directions 2000 can be best described as a multimedia dictionary: a dictionary with pictures, photographs, authentic French voices and student recording facilities. When learners 'look up' a word they get a visual representation of the word, the correct pronunciation of the word by a native French speaker, the word in the context of the whole sentence. They have the option of an English translation and they can record themselves and compare their recording with that of the native speaker role model.

My initial reaction to the package was that, if it worked, it could liberate learners from their dependency on the teacher for role models of pronunciation and the practice of new vocabulary and hence promote student control of the learning process – not easily achievable in the early stages of foreign language learning.

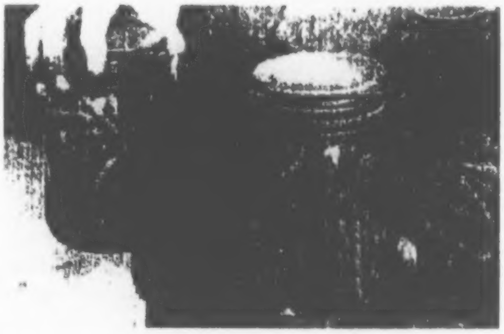
I tried out a basic exercise on small groups of children (Y8s and Y9s) at King Edward VII school. First I gave each small group ten items of food in French to 'research' (I deliberately included ones that would be fairly taxing as a first encounter) and told them that I would test their comprehension, pronunciation and recall of the words after 15 minutes. Then I asked them to record the words they knew already. I showed the learners how to 'look up' the new words and record themselves and then left them to work on their own.

Les mots

- des haricots verts
- une salade de fruits
- un pain au chocolat
- des moules
- une glace à la fraise
- des fruits de mer
- des petits pois
- une tarte aux pommes
- un yaourt



des moules



des haricots verts

un pain au chocolat

90

Observations

The students inferred meaning from the pictures for each vocabulary item and did not need to resort to a definition either in French or in English. The word in context proved more of a challenge and many resorted to the English translation. Initially they were nervous about recording themselves but their confidence grew steadily each time and they listened intently to the French sentence trying hard to imitate the native speaker role model. The students played the key sentence over and over again. The recording facility was a crucial feature in capturing and maintaining their concentration. They were always on 'task' with only one example of distraction (the microphone for recording made a brilliant karaoke prop!). The students worked cooperatively and at no time did they need my support. They clearly enjoyed the activity and were also keen to explore the other facilities on the package.

Findings

I had printed off the photographs of each keyword and at the end of each session I tested their recall and pronunciation using the photos as cues. The students identified all the pictures correctly and they could list most of the vocabulary without any prompting. Pronunciation was not perfect (only 1 out of 10 picked up the aspirate h in haricots verts – I felt this was one instance where a teacher presentation would have produced better results) but it was good given the difficulty of some of the words.

Issues

Traditionally languages have been, and still are for the most part, a teacher-led activity making mixed ability groupings difficult to manage successfully. If I had been introducing the vocab myself as the teacher I would have controlled the pace, length and pitch of practice. Here the student can take control of the pace and direction of learning with equally sound results. This CD-ROM package with its sound feature and interactivity enables effective student-centred learning. The student can practice speaking the target language in a secure situation with an accurate role model. (One very shy boy was really pleased with his success in pronunciation and recall. He did not like having to 'perform' in French in front of the whole class).

Qu'en pensent les élèves?

'The voices sound more human than those on tapes and there's a picture to help you understand what the word's about.' (Kate)

'You can play it over and over. If you get it wrong you can listen again. You can hear is as much as you want and then you can record yourself.' (Simon)

'You can repeat what they say. It's easier than reading it off a sheet of paper because you can get the pronunciation right.' (Caroline)

'The picture helps you remember the word.' (Mark)

'It's got good graphics as well.' (Andrew)

'It's not like Tricolore – in French lessons you just copy the teacher all the time.' (Beth)

'You can do it at your own pace and do it steadily so you get it right. When the teacher asks you in class it's hard to think of it straightaway.' (Sarah)

'The pronunciation is very important. I sometimes do it totally wrong. Here you can keep listening again. If you had one for yourself it's better – you could have it in your room and learn in your own time.' (Nasral)

'It would be good to have them in the school library.' (Mark)

'It's just fun. If you enjoy it you can take it in.' (Joanne)

Thank you to Kate, Sarah, Nasral, Rasa, Joanne, Caroline, Beth, Mark, Andrew and Simon at King Edward VII School.

All in all, Directions 2000 is an important addition to the rapidly expanding corpus of foreign language material on CD-ROM. It has to be said that currently there are a number of rather poorly researched packages on the market. Directions 2000 offers an example of 'good practice' which demonstrates what can be done and it is to be hoped that it will spawn a number of similar initiatives in the field.

Satellite Television for Language Learning

How it works, What programmes? What equipment?

Ann Cambier General Adviser for Derbyshire
and
Mark Wright Alfreton F. E. Centre

How it works

Satellite Televison works in exactly the same way as normal televison: you point your aerial in the direction of the transmitter and then tune your television set into the various stations available. Tuning into satellite television is almost as easy as setting up your portable TV in the bedroom but the satellite signals are much weaker than normal TV signals, so you need a dish to concentrate the incoming signals rather than just a small aerial. Rather than coming from a large TV mast the signals are transmitted from satellites that are positioned over the equator in a relatively stationary position to the earth.

Horizontal and vertical

To receive signals the dish must be pointed directly at the satellite both horizontally and vertically. The horizontal direction is usually given as a bearing/compass direction to the east or west of south and the vertical direction as an elevation from vertical. Hence, the Astra satellite which carries the SKY programmes is located at 19.2 east of south.

The elevation

The elevation varies in just the same way as the nearer you get to a high building the more you must tilt your head back to look at the top floors: the nearer you are to the equator the greater the elevation of the dish. Another factor affecting elevation is the number of degrees that the satellite is away from south. All television satellites are located at a height of 22,247 miles.

What the various elements of technical equipment do

All television receiving equipment is made up of three main parts: something to collect all the signals broadcast from a particular direction; something to tune into the specific signal you want to watch; something to watch the signal on. On your normal television your aerial collects the signal; and your television set tunes into the required station and then displays the picture. For satellite television the dish collects the signal, the receiver tunes into the required station, and any normal television displays the picture. The only part of a basic satellite system that is different from a normal television system is the dish.

The dish

Whereas a television aerial is basically just several lengths of metal connected to a cable, a satellite dish is a bit more complex. A satellite dish is made up of two main parts: the actual dish and the low-noise block down-converter or LNB. The role of the dish is to focus the incoming signals into the LNB. The role of the LNB is to convert high frequency incoming signals down to a frequency low enough to be tuned by your receiver. Also, as satellites are very expensive the broadcasters squeeze as many channels on as possible and this means that some channels are so near to each other there is interference between them: when you are watching one channel your picture is affected by signals from the next channel up or down. To overcome this problem signals are sent either vertically or horizontally.

The vertical or horizontal lining up of a signal is known as polarity and another function of the LNB is to switch between receiving vertical and horizontal signals. Once collected by the dish and LNB the signals pass along a cable to the receiver.

Tuning in the receiver

The function of the receiver is to allow you to tune in to the particular channel you want to watch. To tune into a channel you normally have to: select the frequency of the channel you wish to receive, select the correct polarity, and then tune into the correct sound channel. Due to the fact that sound signals take up a lot less space than pictures most channels have three or more different sound channels broadcasting alongside the picture. These sound channels can either carry different language soundtracks to match the pictures, for example Eurosport broadcasts in English, German, and Dutch, or separate radio channels, for example BBC Radio One is broadcast in stereo on an extra sound channel on the Sky TV channel 'UK Living'.

Viewing

With the exception of French television which uses the SECAM system all satellite pictures can be viewed on any normal television or recorded on any normal video recorder. With the exception of TV5 which is broadcast in PAL (the British system) all the French channels appear in black and white on a normal television. To get colour pictures you need to purchase a Transcoder and these range in price from £120 to £200 but you get excellent pictures.

What programmes?

What channels are available

French on Telecom 2B

TF1

Popular French channel with a wide variety of programmes for all ages. Excellent news coverage. Children's programmes all day Wednesday. Adverts. Saturday night popular variety programmes. In the morning a wide selection of game shows. Teletext available.

FR2

The most popular French channel, covering a wide range of programmes like TF1. The most professional of the French channels. Regular films, and some popular variety shows. There is also a teletext service for TVs able to get it normally. The TV will not display teletext with a British TV when the transcoder is working. Just unplug the decoder! This is the channel I find most useful for school use.

M6

This is the youth channel with lots of music clips, including horoscopes and life stories of famous singers and news extracts about popular stars. The publicity matches the young audience. Also pop concerts of new and old stars, with blues and jazz concerts. News items are quick and snappy.

TMC

Tele Monte Carlo is dominated by dubbed US imports, sitcom series, but contains music items and such programmes as the French version of Treasure Hunt, 'La chasse aux Trésors' and 'Magazine' with informative material.

RTL-TV

From Luxembourg, it has some good music programmes for young people, and cartoons such as full films of Tintin on some Sundays. This channel may be scrambled again at some point but has been clear for the last 6 months at least.

French on Eutelsat II – 11.080GHz/V

TV5

This programme is in colour without a decoder and with an 80 cm dish. It contains a range of the 'best of' French TV. If you cannot get or afford to get the equipment for Telecom 2B you can receive TV5. Sometimes there are really good programmes from the range of other channels, and you have regular news items, publicity, weather etc.

German – ASTRA 18

There are 18 German channels, available on a 60 cm ASTRA dish and unencrypted. You can keep up your language skills very cheaply in German, and just have to choose carefully which programmes are of interest to you. Some German native speakers have a preference for 3SAT as it has more interesting cultural programmes, but you may also want Key Stage 3 material such as game shows, sport, publicity and music.

Information on the German programmes is readily available in Britain. Most of the German channels also benefit from teletext services and as you don't need a decoder for ASTRA you can summon the text up anytime. You can get detailed programme information easily in satellite magazines such as Satellite Times (which is the best for German programmes). Here are some examples:

SAT 1

Games shows and soaps feature highly on this channel. Many programmes will appeal to young people. One of the popular programmes is Star Trek: The Next Generation, on at 3 pm and 11.25 pm.

PRO 7

Lots of American dubbed programmes from the 1970s and 1980s including old favourites. You can get Die Simpsons, which was popular with pupils.

MDR

Popular programmes including films and shopping programmes.

3SAT

The closest you get to BBC2 in German. Cultural and popular material. Certainly the most useful for 6 form material but starts at 8 am with weather and news. Weekends include good family viewing programmes. Probably the most useful channel for your personal enjoyment.

ZDF

This is German regional channel. Normal regional programmes can be viewed including regional news and sport.

Spanish

Up to date information on programmes are included in some Spanish magazines if you can get hold of them! They are in Hola for example. You have to search for the Spanish channels because they are spread over a variety of different satellites.

However, you can get South American Spanish on Galavision, which isn't very slick in terms of technology but has some good programmes and the Spanish is spoken at a slower rate than the programmes from Spain even though the accent may be different.

Galavision - ASTRA Satellite

Because it is on ASTRA you get programme information in the Satellite Times. Popular viewing.

Arte

A mixture of French and German programmes.

TVE International Eutelsat II F1

This is a combination of Spanish terrestrial channels, TVE1 and La2 which have all been put together for Spanish expatriates. Almost everything is in Spanish with very little American dubbed TV. There are regular news items, many quiz shows, soaps and dramas.

Spanish on the HISPASAT Satellite

At the moment the HISPASAT and rtve channels are testing. In the daytime you only get the test picture but there are programmes in the evenings. Unfortunately these channels may be encoded once they are fully functional, but there may still be 'clear' times as there are on many other encoded channels.

The channels planned are as follows.

Antenna 3 Satelite (Canal 39 Hispasat)
TeleDeporte (rtve)
Canal Clasico (rtve)
Canal 31 Hispasat

Italian – Eutelsat II F2

RAI UNO

Theoretically this should be scrambled but it has been clear for at least the last six months. It is Italy's equivalent to BBC 1. It includes the news and adverts, with chat shows and films. It includes sport most weekday evenings.

RAI DUE

This is only scrambled for major films.

South Asian Languages

TV Asia ASTRA

This is encrypted so you need to buy a card. It is aimed at the South Asian communities in Britain and includes popular viewing in a variety of Asian languages including: Urdu, Panjabi, Gujarati, Hindi and Bangla. Subscribe by phoning SKY's subscription centre on 0506 461111.

Japanese

Japan Satellite TV ASTRA

You need a card to receive this. It is intended for Japanese people in Britain. It includes news, children's programmes, cooking, pop music (Saturdays), Travelogue (Sundays). Subscriptions are from JSTV, call 071-607 7677 for details.

Other languages are available in satellite. These include:-

Iranian
Turkish
Greek
Arabic
Chinese/Cantonese
Dutch
Norwegian
Malti
Croat
Polish
Albanian
Tamil
Hungarian
Portuguese

More information about them, including which satellite they are on, can be obtained from satellite magazines. Some of these channels are easily accessible with a 1 m dish, and most or all of the time they are clear.

Hotbird

Due to be launched shortly in the same location as Eutelsat II will carry TV5, Italian, Spanish and Eurosport. This will only require a 60 cm dish.

What equipment?

The equipment you will need will obviously depend to a great extent on the channels you wish to receive. There are two basic types of system available: motorised dish or fixed dish. A motorised dish moves under the control of the receiver and is able to point at virtually any satellite. It is this system that many schools and colleges bought when satellite TV first came out and whilst it does give excellent coverage of a wide range of satellites it does have two disadvantages which mean that it is now a less favoured option. Firstly, the technology needed to control a motorised system is quite complex as is the setting up of the equipment. If you want such a system the price including installation will be £2000+ for an adequate system. The second problem with these systems is that they tend to need quite a lot of looking after as the size of dish required means that they are subject to unwanted adjustment by the wind.

The preferred system nowadays is to use fixed dishes pointed directly at the required satellites. This has the advantage of being a lot cheaper. A basic fixed system ranges from £150 to £400, including installation, depending on the size of dish, the type of LNB and whether or not a transcoder is needed. Also, as the size of dish needed is much smaller such a system is much less likely to cause problems. A recent development has seen the introduction of systems that move the LNB rather than the whole dish. Such systems are a cross between the two systems but as the movement of an LNB is far easier than the whole dish they only cost an extra £120–£150. They are however limited to receiving satellites that are within about 8° of each other but this would include Astra and all the Eutelsats from one 1 m dish.

A typical system to receive the main French channels and all the channels on Eutelsat and Astra would consist of the following:

One 90 cm dish with Telecom LNB – £100 to £200

A transcoder to receive French from Telecom in colour – £120–£200

One 1 m dish with Moveable FFS LNB – £250–£300 (subtract £120–£150 if you don't need moveable LNB)

One receiver £150–£200 (For two dishes you need one with two LNB inputs)

You will need to add £50–£100 for installation unless you want to do it yourself. The only real consideration is how dangerous it is to install the dish. Even a large dish is quite easy to install on a flat roof but even a small 60 cm Astra dish can be very dangerous to install on a high up wall!

A simple Astra system can be purchased for about £180.

Another consideration is that due to the ever moving pace of technical developments there is lots of excellent second hand equipment available. Old dishes are best avoided as any slight damage can ruin them and new ones are very cheap. However, there are lots of old receivers available that owners are getting rid of because they don't have a built in Sky decoder or they only have 150 channels. Such decoders are more than adequate for most educational use and the only points to watch are the range of tuning for the sound channels as the older Astra receivers such as the Amstrad 400 are very limited in this department and the ease of tuning in to new channels. Some models come pre-set and offer very little scope for adjustment. Expect good second-hand equipment to cost between a quarter and a half of the new price.

As with channel information the best place to look at for a guide to prices are the many excellent satellite magazines. However, whilst the best guide to what is on is Satellite Times this magazine has a very poor coverage of technical information such as what channels are available other than on Astra. It also does not carry either many guides to the equipment available or many adverts. The best magazine for technical news is What Satellite which retails for £1.20.

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L'Enseignement de la grammaire

Margaret Wright et
Olive Craig
The Queen's
University of Belfast

Au cours de la dernière décennie la question de l'enseignement de la grammaire n'a cessé de susciter de fortes réactions au sein de la profession enseignante britannique et cela non seulement par rapport à la langue maternelle, mais aussi dans le contexte des langues étrangères. Jusqu'au début des années soixante il aurait été impensable de faire de la grammaire une si grande pomme de discorde. Personne n'en doutait la valeur – elle était essentielle pour nos connaissances linguistiques: connaître la grammaire équivalait à connaître la langue.

L'enseignement traditionnel des langues

Pour mieux comprendre le changement, il faut remonter dans le passé et considérer la philosophie qui a dominé l'enseignement des langues étrangères pendant si longtemps. Le dix-septième siècle a vu un changement profond dans l'enseignement du latin car c'est à cette époque que ce dernier a finalement cédé la place à l'anglais comme langue judiciaire et administrative dans les îles britanniques. Le latin est devenu une langue morte mais une langue qui demandait toujours à être étudiée pour ce qu'elle pouvait apporter à l'intellect. L'introduction des langues vivantes dans le programme scolaire n'a pas occasionné de changements dans la méthode d'enseignement employée. D'abord parce que c'était souvent le professeur de latin qui en avait la responsabilité et il ne connaissait pas d'autres méthodes et, en deuxième lieu, même quand c'était quelqu'un qui s'intéressait à une méthode plus communicative, les conditions n'y étaient pas favorables. Les examens publics soulignaient l'importance des connaissances grammaticales et on se concentrait uniquement sur la langue écrite aux dépens de la langue orale: on apprenait le français pour pouvoir apprécier les grandes oeuvres littéraires dans leur langue d'origine.

Au dix-neuvième siecle, un mouvement de réforme a remis en question la valeur de l'enseignement des langues étrangères tel qu'il existait à l'époque. Des réformateurs, dont des Français et des Anglais, ont avancé de nouvelles techniques basées, entre autres, sur la phonétique, la lecture et la méthode directe. (Pour un résumé voir Hawkins, 1987, chapitre 5.)

Le rapprochement des pays grâce aux développements dans les domaines des transports et de la communication a fait de sorte que la connaissance d'une langue étrangère est devenue un atout, mais, pour qu'elle ait une valeur pratique, il a fallu s'adresser au problème du contenu du programme. Malgré l'introduction d'une épreuve orale, les examens ont continué à refléter l'importance accordée aux connaissances grammaticales, témoignée par le fait que la plupart des points étaient attribués aux thèmes et aux versions.

Les méthodes audio-visuelles, bien qu'elles aient eu un effet important sur les méthodes employées par les enseignants, n'ont rien changé en matière d'examen et ce n'est qu'au début des années soixante-dix que l'on a commencé à parler sérieusement d'une alternative. Dû notamment au travail de Wilkins, on a considéré pour la première fois la possibilité de définir une langue non pas dans ses formes grammaticales, mais en termes de notions et de fonctions – c'est-à-dire, les notions nécessaires pour la communication efficace des fonctions que l'apprenti aura à effectuer. C'est à partir de ce moment-là que l'on peut commencer à parler des *besoins* de l'interlocuteur.

Notions et fonctions

Cette méthode a trouvé son expression dans les examens de CSE, mais il est intéressant de noter que les élèves visés étaient ceux qui étaient censés avoir moins de compétences linguistiques. Quant aux autres plus «doués», on continuait à les instruire à travers des méthodes qui, même si elles étaient modernes dans la technologie dont elles disposaient, avaient pour but une prise de conscience élevée des phénomènes linguistiques. L'introduction des examens de GCSE a semblé mettre fin à la suprématie grammaticale pour la remplacer par la communication. Cette dernière est au coeur du nouveau programme introduit en 1988 et dès lors des milliers d'élèves ont acquis la capacité de s'exprimer plus aisément dans la langue étrangère, de se débrouiller linguistiquement dans une situation. Mais qu'il représente ou non un avancement, le nouveau programme n'est pas sans ses détracteurs surtout quand on aborde le sujet épineux de la grammaire vers lequel nous tournons maintenant notre attention.

L'enseignement de la grammaire au niveau du A Level

Aucun professeur de français expérimenté n'hésitera à dire que ses élèves de «A Level» ont moins de connaissances explicites de la grammaire que ceux d'autrefois. Par contre ils ont plus de confiance pour parler et arrivent mieux à comprendre la langue parlée dans des situations authentiques. C'est un avis qui est soutenu par Johnstone (1994). Il faut bien sûr continuer à développer ces connaissances mais le contenu des examens à A level est plus ample que celui du GCSE. On peut y déceler aussi une philosophie différente. En premier lieu certaines régions, par exemple, L'Irlande du Nord, ont conservé les exercices de thème et de version qui ont pour but d'examiner la compétence grammaticale (et lexicale) du candidat. Deuxièmement on constate que dans certains cas, ou bien la communication n'est plus le critère le plus important dans l'évaluation, ou bien pour obtenir une bonne note dans la catégorie communication, il faut aussi faire preuve d'une prise de conscience des phénomènes linguistiques.

Il faut donc s'adresser à ce problème de l'enseignement de la grammaire à A Level. On ne peut pas balayer les soucis et des professeurs et des élèves en disant que le plus important c'est la communication. Il est bien évident que si on veut réussir à ce niveau il faut aussi acquérir de bonnes connaissances grammaticales. Il en suit deux considérations. D'abord si un élève choisit d'entreprendre l'étude d'une langue à un niveau approfondi, il semble évident qu'il montre un intérêt qui devrait aller plus loin qu'un simple désir de communiquer dans une langue étrangère. Ceux (ou celles) qui s'intéressent beaucoup à l'automobile ne se contentent pas de conduire – ils veulent savoir comment et pourquoi ça marche. Il devrait en être de même avec une langue. En deuxième lieu, des connaissances précises des structures grammaticales ont un rôle primordial à jouer dans le développement des compétences communicatives (Graham and Powell, 1992). De bonnes connaissances grammaticales permettent aussi aux élèves de mieux contrôler leur langage. Que ces connaissances soient implicites ou explicites, sans elles le champ des activités créatives linguistiques est limité. Si on prend le cas de notre langue maternelle, on ne s'exprime pas à l'âge de 20 ans comme on le faisait à l'âge de 5 ans – on a développé des compétences à un point où l'on peut puiser dans un vaste réservoir de structures et de formes lexicales. Et comme les expressions enfantines ne sont plus acceptables à partir d'un certain âge, il faut que celui qui apprend une langue dépasse le stade d'une communication qui est efficace mais qui pourrait se préciser davantage à travers une connaissance plus profonde de la grammaire.

Il ne faut pas oublier non plus que souvent les structures grammaticales ont été présentées d'une façon réceptive en classe soit à l'écrit, soit à l'oral. Les élèves de sixième comprennent très bien «Ouvrez/fermez les cahiers» sans comprendre comment l'impératif se construit. Dans bien des cas alors, on rend explicite ce que les élèves savent déjà. A quoi bon l'expliquer? Pour certains élèves c'est une confirmation de ce qu'ils avaient déduit eux-mêmes, pour d'autres qui n'ont peut-être pas saisi le modèle, une explication formelle peut accentuer et accélérer leur conscience grammaticale (Heafford, 1993).

Mais que faut-il enseigner?

Même si on accepte que l'enseignement de la grammaire est souhaitable, voire indispensable, deux questions se posent – qu'est-ce qu'il faut enseigner, et comment? La méthode fonctionnelle/notionnelle semble nous mettre sur la bonne piste. La structure à apprendre doit avoir un but – elle doit servir à quelque chose, elle doit répondre à un besoin communicatif. Cette façon communicative d'aborder la question donne à la grammaire une valeur neuve, comme prétend Page (1994), qui soutient que toute autre raison est sans validité. Thorogood et King (1994) se font l'écho de cette même pensée. On devrait donc enseigner à nos élèves ce dont ils ont besoin pour être des producteurs indépendants de langage.

Brumfit (entre autres) a souligné pourtant les insuffisances de la méthode fonctionnelle/notionnelle, qui oblige les élèves à apprendre des quantités énormes de phrases isolées, sans lien avec les sous-systèmes grammaticaux dont elles font partie. Selon Brumfit, étant donné que la spécification grammaticale est la plus économique et la plus systématisable, la solution la plus efficace pour la définition du programme d'études en langues étrangères serait de mettre la grammaire au coeur du programme et d'y relier toute autre spécification fonctionnelle, notionnelle ou situationnelle (Brumfit, 1980).

Et comment faut-il enseigner la grammaire?

Il y a deux façons, sinon trois, d'aborder ce problème. Il est sans doute vrai qu'il existe des professeurs qui insistent pour s'accrocher aux bonnes méthodes du passé. La grammaire est enseignée presque comme une matière discrète et sans aucune tentative réelle de l'insérer dans un contexte authentique. Le but des exercices n'est pas d'employer la structure pour communiquer un message, mais uniquement d'évaluer la capacité de l'étudiant de manipuler la structure. Il est peut-être déconseillé d'être tout à fait contre de tels exercices car dans certains cas ils peuvent servir, mais en général il semblerait plus utile de montrer et d'encourager l'usage des structures grammaticales dans des situations «réelles». Une deuxième possibilité – introduire la grammaire uniquement selon les besoins individuels des élèves – pose d'énormes problèmes, dont l'incertitude à l'avance de ce dont chaque élève aura besoin et le grand nombre de besoins qui existeront à un moment donné. Heureusement la dernière gamme de livres de cours offre au professeur la possibilité de prendre un autre chemin. Dans ces cas, la grammaire est souvent, sinon toujours, présentée dans un contexte où son usage est indispensable pour la communication, bien que le contexte soit créé artificiellement. Le grand avantage de ce modèle, c'est qu'il permet au professeur de savoir à l'avance la structure qui sera présentée.

La Langue étrangère comme moyen d'instruction

On ne peut parler de l'enseignement de la grammaire à A Level sans considérer brièvement l'emploi de la langue étrangère comme moyen d'instruction. Les opinions sont divisées – d'un côté ceux qui optent pour tout expliquer à travers la langue étrangère quoi qu'il arrive, et, de l'autre, ceux qui pensent que leurs élèves ne comprendront jamais sauf si la grammaire est expliquée dans la langue maternelle. Comme dans presque tous les cas, il faut essayer de trouver le juste milieu et éviter les extrêmes. Il semble tout à fait raisonnable de donner des explications formelles dans la langue étrangère pourvu qu'il y ait suffisamment d'exemples écrits que les élèves peuvent suivre pour associer l'explication et l'application. Un vocabulaire de termes grammaticaux est aussi indispensable. Chambers (1992) et Taylor (1994) proposent que la compréhension d'un aspect difficile soit vérifiée à travers l'anglais. Hawkins (1994) va jusqu'à préconiser la discussion de la relation (différences, similitudes) entre la langue étrangère et la langue maternelle – discussion qui peut servir de point de repère.

Quelle que soit notre façon d'aborder le problème il faut faire bien attention à ne pas diminuer l'assurance des élèves à parler dans la langue étrangère, si soigneusement cultivée pendant les années de préparation pour le GCSE. Taylor (1994) et Johnstone (1994) attirent notre attention sur le fait que l'on peut très facilement tomber dans le piège d'insister tant sur la précision grammaticale que les élèves n'ouvrent plus la bouche de crainte de faire une faute, aussi petite soit-elle.

A quoi sert la grammaire?

La philosophie didactique actuelle nous encourage à examiner cette question de la grammaire sous un nouvel angle. Bien que l'étude de la grammaire puisse avoir pour certains un intérêt tout particulier, pour la plupart de nos élèves, c'est un outil qui sert à la communication. Malheureusement il n'y a pas de doute que l'apprentissage de la grammaire française ne mène pas forcément à l'acquisition, la capacité de se servir de ses compétences grammaticales lors d'une communication spontanée et en fin de compte c'est la capacité de s'exprimer oralement et à l'écrit avec une bonne précision grammaticale et lexicale qui indique jusqu'à quel point on a maîtrisé la langue.

Maintenant que la question de la grammaire est revenue sur le tapis et de peur que nous ne nous laissions convaincre par ceux qui discréditent l'enseignement de la grammaire, faisons bien attention à ce que le Professeur Hawkins (1994) décrit comme «les besoins grammaticaux» de ceux qui ont choisi l'étude approfondie d'une langue. Il appartient à nous, professeurs, de pourvoir à ces besoins.

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Le Pouvoir et la vie or the metamorphosis of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing

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Le Pouvoir et la vie[1] by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and the *Mémoires de guerre* of Charles de Gaulle are the only two works by the four Presidents of the Fifth Republic which can be regarded as completed memoirs in the conventional sense of the term (although Giscard rejects the term 'mémoires' in his preface). A third volume of *Le Pouvoir et la vie* is promised *(L'Eloignement)*, but the two existing volumes can be read as two complete wholes. Georges Pompidou's *Pour rétablir une vérité* is a fragmentary, unrevised work, published posthumously. François Mitterrand's autobiographical works *(Ma Part de vérité, La Paille et le qrain* and *L'Abeille et l'architecte)*, are transcribed conversations and diaries. *Le Pouvoir et la vie* and the *Mémoires de guerre* have at least two other features in common. Firstly they are forward-looking and targeted at the French electorate, in other words they both contain a propaganda element, namely the promotion of the author as a potential future national leader. Writing of Giscard's first volume in 1988, Franz-Olivier Giesbert comments: 'On pourrait résumer ses 400 pages d'un slogan: "Réélisez-moi"'.[2] Secondly they each recount periods of leadership which end negatively: the *Mémoires de guerre* end with the author's resignation in January 1946 and *Le Pouvoir et la vie* ends with the author's defeat in the presidential election in May 1981.

The differences between the two sets of memoirs are equally interesting. Firstly de Gaulle adopts a more or less chronological approach under the guise of topics, whereas Giscard adopts a thematic approach. Secondly de Gaulle attempts to reduce to the minimum personal and private details, whereas Giscard on the other hand revels in such disclosures. Thirdly de Gaulle wants to convince his reader that the obstacles and difficulties he faced – and ultimately overcame – were never of his own creation and that if he had to relive his life again his conduct would not be substantially different. Giscard on the other hand frequently admits that he made mistakes which he would hope to avoid if he had his time again. Whereas de Gaulle projects an almost superhuman image of himself in the *Mémoires de guerre*, to the extent of often referring to himself in the third person, as if he wanted to detach himself as writer from the national hero incarnating France, Giscard in *Le Pouvoir et la vie* seems to want to project the image of an ordinary human being, with all his weaknesses and shortcomings.

Public image and private man

In the words of Giesbert, 'contrairement aux mémorialistes traditionnels, il ne se tire pas vers le haut mais vers le bas'. He dwells on his own defects like a penitent sinner indulging in mortification and self-flagellation. Giscard's aim was to correct what he calls in his introduction to the first volume 'cet extraordinaire malentendu qui éloigne les gouvernés des gouvernants, en leur faisant croire qu'ils appartiennent à des espèces humaines différentes'(I, 10). Indeed Giscard was only too aware of his quasi-aristocratic, born-with-a-silver-spoon-in-mouth image. His efforts to shake off this image during his presidency – periodic dining with ordinary French families, breakfasting with dustmen, shaking hands with the inmates of a prison – appeared somewhat contrived and even gimmicky. Having perhaps failed, through his actions, to convince the 1981 French voters that he was sufficiently sympathetic to the problems of the man in the street, he was determined to persuade his readers, and potential electors, in 1988 and 1991, that in spite of his name, his background, his education and his wealth, he was at times, as embarrassed, as vulnerable, as ignorant, as libidinous and as amused, as any individual French man or woman can be. Self-belittlement is indeed as evident in *Le Pouvoir et la vie* as the theme of self-justification. At all events, it could be said that 'self' is almost an *idée fixe* in these memoirs. Both the *Mémoires de guerre* and *Le Pouvoir et la vie* are inevitably self-centred; but whereas de Gaulle's selfcentredness is synonymous with an obsessive attachment to the interests of France, Giscard seems fascinated by his own behaviour, his own feelings and his own personality, in the context of his presidency of the Republic.

Le Pouvoir et la vie was intended to be a turning point in Giscard's relations with the French electorate. 'Le livre était pour moi', he admitted in a televised interview, 'l'occasion d'une libération émotionnelle du vécu de mon septennat'.[3] The confidential potential of an autobiography, with its natural person-to-person, author-reader rapport, was the perfect antidote for Giscard to the formality of the political speech delivered in a large hall or in the open air or on television, received by faceless masses. In the presence of an interlocutor, whether he or she be an interviewer or a responsive reader, Giscard emerges as a remarkably relaxed and likeable person.

This discrepancy between the public persona of Giscard as President and the impression conveyed by the author of *Le Pouvoir et la vie* of his private self prompts the first question in Denis Jeambar's interview published in *Le Point* in February 1988:

> A la lecture de votre livre, on est frappé par le décalage entre la description que vous faites de votre vie quotidienne à l'Elysée et l'image qu'on avait de vous durant votre septennat. Vous installez une proximité avec le lecteur qui fait qu'on se demande: qui est le vrai Giscard?[4]

In his response Giscard mentions four factors which may have contributed to this distortion of the truth: firstly for most people a President represents a function rather than a human being; secondly he was considered at the time to be the model representative of the respectable centre right in France; thirdly his height accentuated the impression of distance; finally, being a very emotive person, he was obliged to control, perhaps excessively, his feelings.

The discrepancy between the public image and the private man is matched by the discrepancy between Giscard's previous writings, *Démocratie française* (1976), *L'Etat de la France* (1981) and *Deux Français sur trois* (1984), and *Le Pouvoir et la vie.* These earlier works are the conventional publications expected of a prominent French political leader. They do have a certain visionary quality and their author makes an interesting attempt to discuss France's progress towards a more just society, outside the traditional party political parameters. *Démocratie française* certainly enjoyed a remarkable commercial success: 200,000 copies were sold on the day of its publication and a further 400,000 copies had to be printed to cope with demand. In his preface to the Livre de Poche edition which appeared in January 1978, Giscard claims that 1,200,000 copies had been printed, 'c'est-à-dire deux, à trois fois plus de lecteurs qu'il n'y a d'inscrits réels dans l'ensemble de nos partis politiques' (p. 13). There had also been 16 foreign editions, including the English translation published by Collins in 1977. The book is a model of structured clarity, and to quote Charles Hargrove's assessment of the work, it is a piece of 'precise, methodical, impeccably marshalled but rather cold intellectual argumentation'.[5] As such, it cannot have done anything to dispel the general perception of Giscard as a talented technocrat.

Weaknesses and regrets

Le Pouvoir et la vie is not the work of a technocrat. It is more the work of a talented journalist, reporting not only on events and personalities, but also and especially, on the feelings experienced by the person involved in these events and having to deal with these personalities. The first volume, later sub-titled *La Rencontre*, was hailed by

Le Point as 'un livre surprise' when it appeared in February 1988. Giesbert was even more surprised when he wrote in *Le Nouvel Observateur* a few weeks later: 'Qui l'aurait cru capable d'écrire un tel livre?'

According to Giscard's preface, 'Vivre la Présidence', it was the memory of a moment of physical malaise experienced during the ceremony commemorating Bastille Day in 1974 which sparked off the book. A sudden feeling of dizziness seized him as he was alighting from the military command vehicle in which he had been reviewing his troops: 'Je ne voyais pas comment je pourrais assurer mon équilibre, dans ce grand bourdonnement avec mes jambes picotantes et molles [. . .]. Je me suis aperçu que j'avais arrêté de respirer'. He recovered, but the memory haunted him, and gave him the idea of writing 'un essai pour communiquer le vécu de mon septennat: ce que j'ai ressenti, moralement, physiquement, intellectuellement' (I, 10–11). The theme of personal shortcomings is thus fundamental to these volumes of presidential souvenirs. Each volume consists of nine chapters, each of which centres on a theme and not a slice of chronology. The opening chapter of the first volume for example, 'La Santé des Dirigeants', continues the theme broached in the preface, physical weakness and illness, starting of course with Pompidou's secret but fatal disease, without which Giscard would not have become President in 1974. Could it be that Mitterrand's early frankness over his own illness was in part inspired by his predecessor's treatment of this subject in *Le Pouvoir et la vie?*

The author's next revelation of a personal weakness occurs in the second chapter: 'J'ai commis une faute de jugement au moment de mon installation à l'Elysée: j'ai amené avec moi la quasitotalité de l'équipe avec laquelle j'avais travaillé jusque-là au ministère des Finances' (I, 61). For a President who had just been elected on the slogan 'changement dans la continuité', a confession to having 'une horreur instinctive, viscérale, du changement de l'environnement vivant' (I, 62), seems somewhat ironical. Another regret, this time tinged with shame, is revealed in the next chapter, 'Certains Visages'. On hearing of the exiled Shah of Iran's death from cancer in Egypt (June 1980), Giscard admits that he wanted to attend the funeral. He allowed himself however to be persuaded not to attend for obvious diplomatic reasons. He confesses: 'Je ne me suis jamais pardonné cette décision; [. . .] au fond de moi-même, là où se fait et se défait l'estime qu'on a pour soi, je ne me la pardonne pas encore'(I, 117).

Examples of self-criticism abound in both volumes. In *La Rencontre* he speaks of his failure to revise the rhythm of *La Marseillaise:* 'J'ai souhaité rendre à *La Marseillaise* son caractère d'hymne national [. . .]. On la joue à un rythme endiablé, allègre, comme s'il s'agissait d'une danse joyeuse'(I, 318–19). On his instructions, military renderings of the national anthem were slowed down; but other bands refused to accept this change and Giscard reluctantly yielded to popular opinion and made the following *mea culpa*: '*La Marseillaise* était plus belle, mais j'avais tort. [. . .] Dans la France telle qu'elle est, l'hymne national n'est pas la propriété des dirigeants du pays' (I, 323).

The theme of self-critical humility is sustained in the second volume, *L'Affrontement*. 'Ma culture juridique est pratiquement inexistante' (I, 210), he had already confessed in the first volume. His knowledge of human biology is hardly better: he speaks of 'l'ignorance où je suis des conditions de fonctionnement précis de notre organisme – mes connaissances s'étant arrêtées au point atteint à la fin de mes études secondaires' (II, 353). He readily admits his initial embarassed ignorance of the workings of the military command which suddenly became his responsibility in May 1974. Having been briefed by his Chief of Staff, he comments: 'J'écoute avec attention, mais j'ai du mal à les retenir' (II, 177). He realises he has to work hard in this domain: 'Je suis décidé à combler mon ignorance ' (II, 178). Writing of his talks with Helmut Schmidt on questions of nuclear strategy, he enviously comments: 'je le sens parfaitement à l'aise dans le maniement des concepts et des mots. Pour moi, ils restent encore entourés d'un certain brouillard' (ibid). He readily confesses his ignorance of the Palestinian problem: 'J'ai découvert en effet que je ne savais rien – littéralement rien – sur les Palestiniens' (II, 185). Equally embarrasingly, he also confesses 'en 1979, j'ai mesuré l'état d'ignorance et d'inculture qui était le mien: ceci à propos de la Chine' (II, 227–28)

Giscard's tendency to be self-critical is particularly noticeable with regard to his consciousness of the impression he makes when speaking in public. In *La Rencontre* he comments on an unsuccessful speech delivered in Mali in 1977: 'le texte que je lis est totalement inadapté à la circonstance' (I, 379). In the same volume he writes of a speech given at Carpentras a few months later: 'Mon ton, je le crains, pèche par excès d'optimisme' (I, 349). The most striking of such admissions of failure occurs in *L'Affrontement*. Following disappointing local election results in March 1976, he decided to address the nation in a televised speech to restore confidence in his government. Having expressed regret that he had chosen to wear a dark suit, he goes on: 'Le texte exige que ma voix soit forte, assurée, persuasive. Je l'entends sonner faux, comme un écho dans une cavité. Le premier essai n'est pas convaincant. [. . .] Second essai, toujours décevant' (II, 87). Following a third recording Giscard chose the second and although his friend Jean d'Ormesson tried to reassure him with a cry of 'C'est gagné!', the author confesses to the reader that his own honest impression of the recorded speech was that of 'un oiseau récitant son texte devant un auditoire qui se serait enfui: c'est raté!' (II, 89).

Giscard's biggest regret according to *L'Affrontement*, is his handling of the Bokassa diamonds affair. He had remained strangely silent on this episode in the first volume. His apparently close relations with this self-appointed African emperor who turned out to be a murderous despot, became a source of embarrassment and probably contributed to his failure in the presidential election in 1981. Giscard claims that the diamonds he received from Bokassa in 1973 on the occasion of one of his big-game hunting expeditions to the Central African Republic were eventually sold, on his instructions, for 111,547 francs (far less than their imagined value), and the proceeds were given away to various Central African charities. The insinuations made however by *Le Canard Enchaîné* and *Le Monde* caused Giscard enormous hurt and he ruefully confesses: 'En me souvenant de cette période, je suis frappé par la maladresse que j'ai mise à me défendre' (II, 347). He regrets the dignified silence he maintained at the time and wishes he had retaliated publicly. What emerges strong from his belated coverage of the affair, is not so much his self-vindication which is more or less convincing, but the revelations he makes concerning the effects that the episode had on his feelings and on his behaviour.

A mental block

These revelations occur in the following chapter, 'Le Choc du Pouvoir sur la vie', significantly by far the shortest of the two volumes (eight pages instead of the average of 50), which proves to be the most personal in the whole of Giscard's memoirs. The confessions contained in it verge on the psychotic and are strangely reminiscent of a short story by Giscard's favourite 'héros', Guy de Maupassant, such as 'Le Horla', 'Un fou?' or 'Qui sait?' The opening sentence sets the tone: 'C'est pendant que j'étais Président de la République que j'ai commencé à enlaidir' (II, 351). While the author displays a well developed sense of humour in other parts of these two volumes, he is not joking here. He continues with an unflattering physical self-portrait: 'Je n'ai jamais accepté complètement mon aspect physique: une taille trop élevée, empêchant la démarche d'être vraiment naturelle; une ossature du bassin trop large, juste au-dessous de la ceinture.' He goes on to describe how he gradually became aware of his premature balding, and concludes: 'J'en ai conçu une sorte de terreur.' 'Je ne me regarde jamais dans un miroir', he adds later, 'sauf pour me raser' (II, 352). When walking in a street he carefully avoids looking at his reflection in shop windows. However he confesses that he does look in one mirror in his Authon home, because being in a room with a low ceiling, it casts a shadow on the upper part of his head and makes him look 35 again, the age he would like to have remained. His obsessive attachment to his younger image makes him keep his old suits:

> Je les porte indéfiniment. Comme ils s'usent peu, ils contribuent à m'enfermer dans l'illusion où je vis: celle d'un corps que le passage du temps ignorerait et laisserait vivre à son rythme antérieur, sans chercher à conduire sa lente démolition. (II, 353)

His self-analysis is not limited to his physique: 'je n'ai pas, je crois, ce qu'on appelle un bon caractère' (II, 354). But, he adds, he can usually control his feelings and his bad moods. However, in 1979, 'sous l'effet des critiques et des campagnes menées contre moi, une autre évolution s'est amorcée. Elle a été plus brutale, et a entraîné des conséquences dont j'ai mis plusieurs années à me défaire'(II, 355). The consequences were indeed quite extraordinary: 'une sorte de phénomène de rejet ou d'incompatibilité. A ce point qu'il m'était devenu physiquement impossible de lire un journal ou de regarder une émission télévisée dans lesquels je pensais qu'il serait question de moi' (ibid). Giscard realizes that his reader will find the following admission incredible: for nine years (up to 1988):

> Je n'ai jamais jeté les yeux sur la page politique d'un journal quotidien, ou d'un hebdomadaire, je n'ai pas lu un seul article me concernant, je n'ai pas regardé une seule fois le journal télévisé du soir - par crainte que mon nom y soit mentionné. (ibid)

He realised one day that his condition had affinities with that experienced by autistic children, which of course can be treated: 'ils me faisaient toucher du doigt une réalité que j'ignorais jusque-là: la possibilité pour notre système psychologique de se bloquer, au-delà de toute tentative rationnelle d'agir sur lui'(II, 357). Giscard is today cured, but his 'illness' has marked him and he ends his account of this embarrassing episode in his life by quoting the words of Madame Louise: 'Souffrir passe, avoir souffert ne passe pas' (II, 359).

Giscard's fellow feeling for autistic children may well be associated with the child-like sense of wonder he sometimes expresses. In November 1974 he spent a night on a nuclear submarine. He cannot understand how a missile fired from a moving underwater platform, can perform the miracle of striking a target thousands of kilometres away. And a little further he goes on to write: 'je me suis endormi dans le ronronnement étouffé des moteurs, en pensant à ces centaines de mètres d'eau de mer au-dessus de moi et, au-dessous, à ces cavernes d'algues et de crustacés enchevêtrés où la lumière ne pénètre jamais' (II, 182). One is reminded also of his obsessive attachment to the innocence of childhood, which he sees in the first volume bathed in a golden light and as 'un temps où tout était sage, doux, harmonieux – un temps dont il ne faut pas chercher à s'éloigner mais vers lequel, au contraire, on doit tenter de revenir' (I, 62).

Comic gifts

Passing reference has just been made to Giscard's sense of humour. Neither de Gaulle nor Mitterrand, whose writings often display the more traditional French traits of irony and satire, has the sense of fun which the author of *Le Pouvoir et la vie* revels in. Giscard defends his love of flippancy when he defines 'la règle de ce livre' *(L'Affrontement)* as being 'ne pas accepter que les contraintes du pouvoir imposent de dissimuler les bizarreries de la vie' (II, 389–90). The previous volume had contained a number of examples. In his revelation concerning a sudden illness affecting Helmut Schmidt in 1980, he cannot resist making a little joke at his own expense: 'Le médecin sort un stéthoscope – seul instrument médical que je connaisse par son nom – de sa valise noire.' (I, 59) His account of how ministers relieved the boredom of cabinet meetings chaired by de Gaulle, by surreptitiously passing notes to each other, is a good example of Giscard's comic talent (I, 205–6). The second volume offers even more comic anecdotes. The ceremonial solemnity of 14 July 1976 is shattered by Giscard's decision to sit on a rain-soaked chair while waiting for the arrival of the armoured vehicles in the Place de la Concorde. His ministers follow suit unsuspecting of the farcical consequences:

> Le tissu des sièges complètement imbibé d'eau avait commencé à déteindre. Et lorsqu'il a fallu nous relever, pour saluer le drapeau qui arrivait porté à bras tendus par par un officier sur le premier véhicule, je me suis arraché difficilement au coussin de mon fauteuil, qui a rendu le soupir humide et mou d'une ventouse. (II, 104)

The most frequent sources of comedy in *L'Affrontement* relate to Giscard's encounters with African and Soviet personalities. His conversations with President Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast provide a rich source of colourful and amusing anecdotes, all reflecting different aspects of the clash between European and African cultures. Giscard hears about the widespread use of poison to get rid of awkward rivals in the Ivory Coast. Houphouët-Boigny elaborates: 'On les met dans la bouche, contre une dent, dans un petit sachet, et on les souffle dans le visage de l'homme qu'on veut empoisonner.' (II, 287) On hearing this, the author suddenly realised the sinister significance of a reply he had previously received when he had asked his host why village elders talking in a circle, had changed positions: 'Parce que le vent a tourné, [. . .] et que l'un d'eux ne veut pas se trouver sous le vent par rapport à l'autre!' (II, 288) Bokassa of course provides some comic material, as for example when presenting his numerous children to Giscard, he cannot remember all their names!

The most sustained piece of comic writing in *L'Affrontement* relates to Giscard's visit to the new Soviet Embassy in Paris in June 1977 on the occasion of its inauguration in the presence of Leonid Brezhnev. The whole episode is one long catalogue of embarrassing and amusing incidents. Brezhnev had a short conversation with Giscard's two sons but it transpired that all he asked them was if they knew where the toilet was! On being informed that the man responsible for the chaotic dinner arrangements was none other than the Soviet ambassador, Brezhnev remarks: 'Alors, il faudrait se servir de cette machine qu'on avait inventée pendant la Révolution française'. Giscard provides him with the name of the instrument in question and Brezhnev resumes: 'Oui, c'est cela, la guillotine, [. . .], il faudrait la lui appliquer!' And the author adds: 'Et il a fait le geste de se passer le doigt sur la gorge.' (II, 399–400) This episode is strangely reminiscent of another Franco-Soviet encounter recounted by de Gaulle in his *Mémoires de guerre*, relating to his meeting with Stalin in the Kremlin in December 1944.[6]

Descriptive powers

What are the other features of *Le Pouvoir et la vie* which belie the conventional image of the author-President? Certainly his romantic attachment to nostalgic memories, to exotic places such as Venice and to authors and topics with an escapist flavour:

> Tous les soirs de ma présidence, [. . .], j'ai lu une demi-heure avant de m'endormir. C'était un plaisir exquis, qui me faisait connaître une sorte de double vie, car aucune de mes lectures n'a jamais eu de rapport direct ou indirect avec ma fonction de Président de la République. (II, 213)

The reference to his 'double vie' is indeed revealing. Who are Giscard's bedside heroes? (The chapter concerned is entitled 'Mes Héros'.) First and foremost his literary idol, Maupassant, to whom he was apparently introduced by his chauffeur! Then follow Louis XV, Madame du Barry, Louis XI, Marguerite de Navarre, Alexandre Dumas, Henri III, Tolstoy, Talleyrand, Mozart and curiously, Jean-Paul Sartre who met Giscard in 1979.

Of Giscard's own literary qualities, perhaps the most interesting is his ability to recreate the physical impression of being present at a particular place or in the company of a particular individual. He has a remarkable memory for places and faces, based on an unusually well developed sense of observation of detail. He is particularly sensitive to smells:

> J'aperçois, par la fenêtre, la silhouette gris-mauve de notre chien Jugurtha qui descend par le sentier se baigner dans la crique du fort, en se roulant sur le dos

> dans l'eau, d'où il rapportera tout à l'heure une odeur musquée de varechs.

But he attempts to appeal to all the senses, particularly our vision, in his creation of atmosphere which he obviously considers essential to the full understanding of any event he is recounting. As he reveals to Denis Jeambar in *Le Point*, 'Au siècle médiatique, il faut que les descriptions soient très visuelles, que le lecteur puisse avoir le sentiment qu'il regarde les choses.' Giscard obviously has an excellent sensory memory; he seems able to relive the physical sensation of an experience which had occurred years before. Here for example he recalls receiving a directive from de Gaulle which he could not obey: 'Cette annonce me fait l'effet d'un coup reçu quelque part sur la nuque, dans le dos, entre les omoplates.' (II, 30) Whether fictitious or authentic, the description is effective. As he explains in his preface to the first volume, 'le souvenir est en lui-même une forme d'exactitude: puisque je me souviens de tel événement ou de telle impression de cette manière-ci, c'est bien la substance qu'ils m'ont laissée' (I, 12).

The vividness of his portraiture is partly due to his fascination with faces. Of Bokassa, he writes:

> Un grain de peau serré [. . .] donne à son visage, très noir, et sillonné de rides épaisses, un aspect de cuir souple. Ruisselant de santé, des cheveux plantés drus, et des dents éclatantes, nettes et tranchantes. Des yeux très vifs, dont le regard précis vous guette, comme à l'affût, puis s'anime pour imposer son impression du moment: la tristesse, la bienveillance, le rire truculent. Son visage est rond, plein, entouré d'un collier de barbe continu, mais clairsemé, mêlé de poils gris: un masque africain. (II, 293)

De Gaulle, whose portraits are equally memorable for different reasons, hardly ever referred to facial features.

There is little doubt that Giscard deliberately set out to surprise, if not to shock, his reader. Revelations, confessions, abound. In the first volume Helmut Schmidt reveals to Giscard that his father was a Jew: 'La stupéfaction me saisit', comments the author. (I, 158) In the second, Giscard tells of his amazement on hearing Kissinger's revelation that Franco-American cooperation in nuclear research had been going on for years. (II, 188) But perhaps the most notorious instance of the author's ability to shock, intentional or unintentional, was his salacious reference to one of his ministers, Alice Saunier-Séïté: 'Son corps est musclé, avec des mouvements d'une aisance féline, et des jambes qui me paraissaient bronzées. Une pensée bizarre me traverse l'esprit: quand elle faisait l'amour, elle devait y mettre la même véhémence.' (I, 277) The man-in-the-street image is complete: Giscard is totally normal, endowed with all the human foibles any future President could wish for.

Notes

1. Published by Cie 12: vol. I February 1988; vol. II June 1991.
   Later reprinted by Livre de Poche. Page references relate to original editions.
2. 'La résurrection de Giscard: Valéry détonne', *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 11–17 mars 1988.
3. 'Le pouvoir et la vie', TF1, 10–11 mai 1990.
4. 'VGE grandeur nature', *Le Point*, 29 février 1988, p. 30.
5. *The Times*, 16 June 1977.
6. *Le Salut*, Presses Pocket, p. 94.

Informal French but just how informal?

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It is with considerable interest that I read Nigel Armstrong's article on *The sounds of informal French (Francophonie,* Dec. 1994, No. 10, pp. 20–5). I agree that it is reasonable to expect advanced learners to have at least a passive knowledge of the effect of style on language use and I believe that his comments would be usefully applied in secondary and higher education (even though I have noted that university students returning from their year abroad are sometimes unable to adopt the more formal registers with which they were once familiar, and which would be more suitable for the formal settings of oral exams!).

The article presented *some of the phonetic detail of what the sounds of 'official' or formal French undergo in casual style* under the four headings of elision of consonants, elision of vowels, assimilation and liaison. It is on the status of assimilation that I would like to comment further here. I would like to show that assimilation is not just a feature of informal speech, but that it may be found among native speakers of all ages in more formal reading styles under interview conditions.

A 1988 survey: the ENS and RATP

Several relevant points of interest beyond the main focus of a survey carried out in Paris in 1988[1] emerged recently as I was listening to the recordings made at that time. The one explored here briefly, resulting from economy of effort or poor synchronisation of articulatory movements, is regressive assimilation of voice (as in, for example, the 'avec' of '. . . avec des . . .' being pronounced [avɛk̬] or [avɛg] under the influence of the following [d] of 'des').

The informants

The informants were selected from two broad social groups (students or ex-students of the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris and workers from the Réseau Autonome des Transports Parisiens (RATP). Three age groups were selected in each of the two social categories (two groups of ten 20-year-olds[2] (Juniors), two groups of ten 35-year-olds (Majors) and two groups of ten 55-year-olds (Seniors), making a total of 60 informants).[3]

Regressive assimilation[4]

The usage of those 60 informants, all from the Paris region, revealed a majority tendency to assimilate in a corpus of ten sentences containing the non-voiced stops and fricatives [p], [f], [s], [t], [ʃ] and [k] followed by the voiced occlusives [d] or [b] at a word boundary (or in two cases [s] followed by [m], within a word in the *-isme* suffix). The sounds were partially voiced or became indistinguishable from their voiced counterparts [b], [v], [s], [d], [ʒ] and [g], showing regressive or anticipatory assimilation.

The corpus

The sentences, which formed part of a much larger corpus which was read, were:

1. Ils écrivent avec des feutres.
2. Défense de fumer.
3. C'est beau l'optimisme.
4. C'est un groupe d'éclaireurs.
5. On n'aime plus les contes de fées.
6. Elle est restée bouche bée.
7. On ne lui a manifesté que de l'ostracisme.
8. Le chef d'orchestre est un étrange soliste.

9. Les invités ont apprécié la délicatesse des mets.

10. Le lac de Côme.[5]

In sentences 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10, the consonants [k], [s], [p], [t], [ʃ], [f], [s] and [k] respectively are in the implosive (weak) position, ending a syllable, while [d] and [b] are in the explosive (strong) position, starting a syllable.

Results

Results for the 60 informants over the whole corpus reveal a majority of regressive assimilations of voice, the figure being 53.5%.

The percentage is even higher if sentences 3 and 7 are excluded (i.e. those containing the *-isme* suffix). The figure in this case is 66.5% overall, rather high if one considers the fact that the recordings are of a reading style, not an informal one.[6]

Other figures are of interest here: those corresponding to the usage of the six distinct groups taken separately, ENS A, ENS B, ENS C, RATP A, RATP B and RATP C.

The percentages corresponding to the performance for the full corpus reveal an overall majority of assimilations.

Assimilations in the whole corpus (%)[7]

	A	B	C	
	Jun	Maj	Sen	Average
ENS	57	45	57	53
RATP	60	46	56	54
Overall				53.5

It will be noted that the performance is similar in the two social categories in a given age group (with the performance of the B groups (Majors) appearing to be more formal than that of the other two groups). However, if the percentages are rectified to show only word-boundary assimilation, another distinction emerges – the RATP groups show a greater tendency to assimilate, the figures being up to 13% higher.

Assimilations at word boundaries only (in percentages)

	A	B	C	
	Jun	Maj	Sen	Average
ENS	63.75	51.25	67.5	61
RATP	77	59	79	72
Overall				66.5

The *-isme* suffix

The *-isme* suffix is worth considering in isolation. While voicing only occurs on one occasion among the RATP informants (and that is in the performance of an RATP A (Junior)),[8] it is far more likely to occur among the ENS groups and the tendency is clearly a growing one, as the figures below demonstrate.

'-isme' as [izm(ə)] (Questions 3 & 7) (%)

	A	B	C
	Jun	Maj	Sen
ENS	30	20	15

These percentages are low and indicative of the relative formality of the interview reading style.

Martinet and Weinsberg

Martinet's 1941 prisoner-of-war survey contained six relevant sequences: *médecin, absent, anecdote, faux jeton, vingt-deux* and *civisme,* three of which were originally selected to check for regressive assimilation involving voicing: *1) anecdote, 2) vingt-deux* and *3) civisme.* (Martinet subsequently realised that 2) was affected by nasalisation.) He noted that 53% of Parisians claimed to pronounce a [k] in 1) *anecdote,* 37% a [t] in 2) *vingt-deux* and 15% a [z] in the *-isme* of *civisme.*

This would indicate a minority of assimilations, the figure being around 35%.

It should, however, be noted that Martinet's survey was introspective, in that it was based on the speaker's own view of what he said. We would therefore expect the results to be rather normative. Equally important is the fact that the figures were not only variable according to the word chosen, but also according the the age group.

Conclusions

Regressive assimilation at word boundaries is a feature of relatively formal varieties of spoken French.

In 1988, the voicing of the [s] in *-isme* [ism] was still being suppressed in more formal registers, though the growing tendency was apparent.

At word boundaries assimilation was more likely to occur among RATP speakers than ENS speakers.

This small part of a substantial corpus marks the entry of the new [izmə] suffix into reading styles.

More recent surveys, covering a variety of styles or registers, will clarify, and perhaps question, established views on the relationship between register and sociolect on the one hand and assimilation on the other.[9]

Notes

1. For survey details and informants, see 'Le Mareuc revisited et qu'en dit Vaugelas?' in *French Studies Bulletin*, No. 34, Spring 1990, p. 1 or, the author's PhD thesis *The determination of French mid-vowels* (London University, 1990).
2. Ages are approximate.
3. Age categories are those of André Martinet's *Prononciation du français contemporain*, Droz, 1945
4. 'Il arrive souvent que les vibrations des cordes vocales commencent *trop tôt* ou *trop tard*, cessent *trop tôt* ou *trop tard* parce que l'entrée en action n'est pas synchrone. Cela varie selon la personne ou les régions.' F. Carton, *Introduction à la phonétique du français*, Paris, Bordas, 1974
5. It will be noted that the articulation of mute e may be a bar to assimilation by separating the two consonants. This occurred in a small number of cases.
6. According to Kenneth Dutton in *Spoken French*, pp. 114–18 – assimilation may be characteristic of 'casual, slipshod speech' as in [œ̃ mti garsɔ̃] or 'regular practice in cultured speech'. He states that his examples of partial regressive assimilation are made 'only in speech that is at least moderately rapid. In slow, deliberate speech, they would appear forced'.
7. If a sentence was missed, the percentage given is a proportion of those actually read.
8. Some RATP informants deleted the final consonant altogether or read [ist].
9. D'un point de vue physique, on voit pourquoi ces phénomènes reçoivent le nom de 'facilités de prononciation': ils se produisent d'autant plus fréquemment qu'il y a moins de surveillance; jugés de façon négative, ils constituent des indicateurs sociolinguistiques', Françoise Gadet, *Le français ordinaire*, Paris, Colin, 1989, p. 95.

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Lorsque Prévert fait le portrait d'un oiseau

C. E. J. Dolamore University of Leeds

Pour faire le portrait d'un oiseau

Peindre d'abord une cage
avec une porte ouverte
peindre ensuite
quelque chose de joli
quelque chose de simple
quelque chose de beau
quelque chose d'utile
pour l'oiseau
placer ensuite la toile contre un arbre
dans un jardin
dans un bois
ou dans une forêt
se cacher derrière l'arbre
sans rien dire
sans bouger ...
Parfois l'oiseau arrive vite
mais il peut aussi bien mettre de longues années
avant de se décider
Ne pas se décourager
attendre
attendre s'il le faut pendant des années
la vitesse ou la lenteur de l'arrivée de l'oiseau
n'ayant aucun rapport
avec la réussite du tableau
Quand l'oiseau arrive
s'il arrive
observer le plus profond silence
attendre que l'oiseau entre dans la cage
et quand il est entré
fermer doucement la porte avec le pinceau
puis
effacer un à un tous les barreaux
en ayant soin de ne toucher aucune des plumes de l'oiseau
Faire ensuite le portrait de l'arbre
en choisissant la plus belle de ses branches
pour l'oiseau
peindre aussi le vert feuillage et la fraîcheur du vent
la poussière du soleil
et le bruit des bêtes de l'herbe dans la chaleur d'été
et puis attendre que l'oiseau se décide à chanter
Si l'oiseau ne chante pas
c'est mauvais signe
signe que le tableau est mauvais
mais s'il chante c'est bon signe
signe que vous pouvez signer
Alors vous arrachez tout doucement
une des plumes de l'oiseau
et vous écrivez votre nom dans un coin du tableau.

Paroles (1949)

Grâce à l'excellente anthologie de Christiane Mortelier (*Anthologie Prévert*, Methuen, 1981), les poésies de Jacques Prévert sont maintenant à la portée d'un public nombreux en Grande-Bretagne. Ainsi la jeune génération britannique est-elle enfin en mesure d'apprécier les qualités de l'oeuvre d'un poète non seulement populaire, mais aussi parfois profond.

Le seul défaut de cette anthologie c'est de ne pas avoir trouvé assez de place pour un des poèmes de Prévert les plus significatifs et les plus «voyants»: «Pour faire le portrait d'un oiseau» (*Paroles*, 1949). Aucun autre poème de Prévert n'illustre si clairement que celui-ci, avec son charme naïf et son inspiration fantaisiste, ce que le poète croyait être la nature de l'art. Alors que l'artiste peut être considéré comme «un chiffonnier fastueux», ramassant «des objets égarés/des souvenirs éperdus retrouvés tout vivants» («La cinquième saison») comme Prévert lui-même dans «Inventaire», par exemple il est aussi l'explorateur des régions situées au-delà du réel, qui, non content de reproduire le monde tel qu'il nous paraît, cherche surtout à nous en révéler l'aspect surréel.

Art et surréalité

Dans ce poème, dont le thème embrasse la poésie aussi bien que les beaux-arts, Prévert nous fait entrer dans le domaine privilégié de l'art, et réalise cette fusion des deux états de la conscience tant recherchée par les surréalistes, avec qui il avait des liens: «la résolution [. . .] de ces deux états, en apparence si contradictoires, que sont le rêve et la réalité, en une sorte de réalité absolue, de *surréalité*».[1] «Pour faire le portrait d'un oiseau» nous mène donc au coeur même de l'art de Prévert, voire de l'art tout court. Voilà pourquoi il nous fournit la clef qui nous permet d'apprécier mieux certains autres poèmes inspirés par les artistes qui étaient ses héros: «Complainte de Vincent», «Promenade de Picasso», «Miroir Miró», et bien d'autres encore.

Quelques paradoxes

Reprenant l'un de ses thèmes préférés, celui de l'oiseau, symbole de tout ce qu'il y a de libre et de libérateur, Prévert le place dans un cadre qui lui est également cher, celui de la création artistique, foyer de l'imagination, du dépassement du réel quotidien. Lui qui détestait les professeurs et adorait les peintres, se propose ici, avec un petit sourire ironique, de nous faire une leçon sur la peinture: «Peindre d'abord une cage . . . ». Avec ses infinitifs froidement objectifs, le poème ressemble dès l'abord à un manuel pour débutants, ou à une recette culinaire. Puisque l'art, qui n'est que mystère, n'a pas de recettes, le ton du poème s'avère badin.

Autre énigme: si l'on cherche à représenter un oiseau, pourquoi commencer par peindre une cage, d'autant plus que celle-ci sera effacée par la suite? Ce paradoxe est significatif: il s'agit non seulement de capter un oiseau vivant, mais aussi de lui assurer la liberté, de sorte que l'écart qui existe normalement entre un objet et sa représentation dans un tableau disparaisse. En outre, il faut que l'oiseau soit heureux, que la joie de la liberté le pousse à chanter. C'est là le critère de succès que Prévert propose à l'apprenti artiste.

Cependant le message apparent du poème – les procédés à suivre pour effectuer le tableau – n'en est pas l'intérêt principal. Il s'agit en effet de l'interpénétration de deux plans de réalité, celui de la vie quotidienne (ou rationnelle) et celui de l'imagination créatrice (ou irrationnelle). En tant qu'allégorie de la création artistique, le poème nous montre que la réalité d'une oeuvre d'art n'est pas celle de tous les jours, mais plutôt celle de l'imagination servant de filtre à la réalité extérieure.

Préparation et attente

Au début du poème, le vocabulaire simple, les locutions répétitives et les énumérations[2] lui donnent un rythme rapide et aisé, comme celui d'une chanson populaire. Nous nous trouvons dans le monde physique, entourés d'objets familiers à trois dimensions, arbre, jardin, bois ou forêt. L'arrêt soudain du mouvement, l'arrivée d'une période de suspense appartiennent également à ce monde-là, tout en évoquant l'image familière d'un jeu enfantin: «se cacher derrière l'arbre/sans rien dire/sans bouger».

L'attente qui ponctue le poème ici est remplie par des considérations plus abstraites: «se décourager», «attendre», «vitesse», «lenteur», «réussite». Voici un moment de recueillement où le lecteur tant soit peu dérouté se demande s'il s'agit bien de l'arrivée d'un véritable oiseau, ou bien s'il faut interpréter ceci comme symbole de l'inspiration incertaine de l'artiste. Pour l'instant, la question doit rester sans réponse.

Un monde ambigu

L'étape suivante, annonçant l'éventuelle arrivée de l'oiseau dans la «toile», prolonge l'attente silencieuse («observer le plus profond silence/attendre...»), puis reprend très doucement le mouvement. Nous approchons de la partie la plus délicate de l'entreprise: «fermer doucement la porte avec le pinceau/puis/effacer un à un tous les barreaux». Le doute qui flottait jusqu'ici sur le sens du poème commence enfin à se disperser, sans pour autant céder la place à la clarté logique: nous nous retrouvons plutôt dans un monde ambigu, englobant à la fois le rationnel et l'irrationnel. Au cours de notre lecture, notre esprit, qui doit passer et repasser entre le monde du réel et celui de l'imagination, n'aperçoit plus la frontière qui les sépare normalement. Grâce au poème, nous abordons nous-mêmes le domaine où «le réel et l'imaginaire [. . .] cessent d'être perçus contradictoirement».[3] Autrement dit, le poème nous fait entrer dans le monde surréel, où le réel et l'imaginaire ne font plus qu'une seule chose, domaine du beau que le surréalisme qualifiait de «merveilleux».[4] L'effacement des barreaux de la cage suggère la remise en liberté de l'oiseau, mais il s'agit aussi de l'effacement de la barrière séparant le monde de la perception rationnelle de celui de l'imagination: l'art nous donne la possibilité de passer librement entre ces deux domaines.

Le hasard

Le rôle que joue la chance dans le processus décrit par le poème (car nous sommes prévenus que l'oiseau n'arrivera peut-être pas), n'est pas sans rappeler un autre élément très important du surréalisme, pour lequel l'artiste était comme un médium sensible aux hasards de la pensée («automatisme psychique pur»[5]) et ouvert à des expériences imprévisibles. C'est avec une simplicité plaisante que Prévert se souvient de cette foi surréaliste en le hasard en constatant que l'accomplissement du tableau dépend de l'oiseau (qui doit «se décider») et non de l'artiste (qui, disponible, ne fait qu'attendre).

Images du décor

La partie suivante du poème en est la plus ample. Alors que le mouvement reprend de la vitesse, une nouvelle énumération, plus dense que celle du début, élabore la description du décor naturel qui convient à l'oiseau. Arrivé au point culminant du tableau, le poète a recours à des vers plus longs et à des images plus complexes et plus suggestives. C'est comme s'il se permettait enfin de parler à haute voix après le chuchotement des étapes précédentes: le ton plus assuré exprime le soulagement, la joie et la confiance retrouvée. Si physiques que soient les images de la nature que nous lisons ici, elles sont moins purement visuelles qu'elles n'en ont l'air. En premier lieu, «peindre [. . .] le vert feuillage» ne pose pas de problème, si ce n'est la place de l'adjectif de couleur, qui lui accorde un sens tout aussi symbolique que physique: le feuillage est vivant et signe de la renaissance d'une nature vigoureuse et accueillante. Mais le peintre doit savoir représenter aussi, par les moyens picturaux dont il dispose, «la *fraîcheur* du vent», «la *poussière* du soleil» et «le *bruit* des bêtes de l'herbe dans la *chaleur* d'été». C'est ainsi que l'artiste doit dépasser la simple reproduction du monde physique pour suggérer le monde invisible, celui des sentiments. Car ces vers n'évoquent pas seulement la beauté naturelle et les sensations de fraîcheur et de chaleur, mais aussi l'état d'âme qui leur correspond, c'est-à-dire un sentiment de bien-être, de joie de vivre. De cette manière, alors, grâce à des «correspondances» baudelairiennes,[6] le poème nous introduit subtilement, au moyen d'images physiques, dans le monde spirituel, mélange qui rappelle aussi celui des domaines du réel et du surréel.

Jeux de mots

De nouveau, bien que le contraste soit moins brusque cette fois-ci, le mouvement accéléré s'arrête et le poète nous redit d'«attendre». (C'est là un des mots-clés du poème, qui l'aère et le ponctue de silence.) Cette attente nous prépare une dernière surprise, car la fusion des deux «réalités» qui a parcouru le poème entier se résume enfin en un jeu de mots simple et amusant, ce qui est très approprié, puisque le jeu de mots se définit lui-même comme la conjonction de deux réalités, l'expression de l'ambiguïté par le langage. En exploitant l'ambiguïté du mot «signe» – «c'est bon signe/signe que vous pouvez signer» – Prévert met en valeur la signification essentielle de son texte. Si le peintre a réussi son tableau, c'est qu'il a réalisé, grâce à l'ambiguïté de son oeuvre, la fusion de l'imagination et du monde extérieur.

L'oiseau réel (et non réaliste), une fois capté par l'imagination de l'artiste, entrera en effet dans un espace élargi et hors du temps où il jouira d'une liberté accrue, liberté qu'il voudra célébrer en chantant.

Et c'est en jouant finalement sur les deux acceptions du mot «plume» – c'est à peine si l'on peut parler ici d'un jeu de mots, tellement le rapport est évident et, par conséquent, juste - que le poète affirme la synthèse tant recherchée de l'art et de la réalité: il est tout à fait convenable que ce soit «une des plumes de l'oiseau» qui permette à l'artiste d'écrire son nom «dans un coin du tableau». L'oeuvre est achevée; elle a réussi à faire entrer la surréalité dans le monde, et à nous faire entrer nous-mêmes, au cours de notre lecture, alors que nous passons librement entre le réel et le non-réel, dans le pays des merveilles qu'est l'art.

Il est à noter que le poème ne cherche pas à nous *expliquer* ces choses-là. Etant donné le mépris affiché par Prévert pour le domaine des «idées» («Le monde mental/ Ment/Monumentalement»[7]), il serait surprenant qu'il nous offre une discussion intellectuelle sur l'idée de l'art. Plutôt, à la manière d'un drame, il fait *représenter* par son poème l'expérience même de la fusion des deux réalités dont nous avons parlé. C'est le texte lui-même qui opère le passage entre les deux plans, et cela pour chaque lecteur, qui se sent libéré, comme l'oiseau, dans l'espace élargi du surréel.

Oiseaux et surréel

On peut s'étonner qu'une parenté imprévue entre Prévert et un autre poète, Saint-John Perse, son aîné de treize ans et Prix Nobel, vienne confirmer la justesse de son choix d'image centrale et le sens qu'il lui donne. Dans *Oiseaux*, poème en prose de St-J. Perse écrit en 1963 et inspiré en partie par les tableaux de Georges Braque, nous lisons ce passage éloquent à propos des oiseaux qui semble comme l'écho du poème de Jacques Prévert:

> Mais du réel qu'ils sont, non de la fable d'aucun conte, ils emplissent l'espace poétique de l'homme, portés d'un trait réel jusqu'aux abords du surréel.[8]

De la même façon, l'oiseau, créature privilégiée qui a inspiré tant de poètes par sa liberté et sa capacité de vol, représente dans le poème de Prévert l'envol de l'imagination qui nous donne accès au merveilleux surréel de l'art.

Notes

1. André Breton, *Manifestes du surréalisme*, Idées/Gallimard, 1975, pp. 23–24. (Citation tirée du premier *Manifeste*, 1924.)
2. La juxtaposition des adjectifs «beau» et «utile» semble faire un clin d'oeil ironique au mouvement dit de «l'art pour l'art» du XIXe siècle et à son chef, Théophile Gautier, selon qui l'art n'avait pour but que la beauté et devait rejeter tout ce qui pouvait être considéré comme utile.
3. Breton, op. cit., pp. 76–7. (Citation tirée du *Second Manifeste*, 1930.)
4. «Le merveilleux est toujours beau, n'importe quel merveilleux est beau, il n'y a même que le merveilleux qui soit beau.» Ibid., p. 24.
5. Ibid., p. 37.
6. Cf. «Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,/Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,/ – Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,/[. . .] Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.» (Baudelaire, «Correspondances», *Les Fleurs du Mal*).
7. «Il ne faut pas . . .», *Paroles*.
8. *Oeuvres complètes*, Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1972, p. 425.

Parlez-vous franglais or Do you speak Frenglish?

Hugh Dovey Thetford

René Etiemble was well aware of the two way traffic of words across the Channel. After the publication in 1963 of his *Parlez-vous franglais?* in 1981 he came up with a name for the French component in the English vocabulary: Frenglish. It is a convenient word and deserves wider currency.

Most Frenglish words exist in French as well and the majority have the same meaning in both languages. By comparison, one group of Frenglish words – some 400 of them – stands out: they are no longer used in French but in English they live on in the mainstream of the vocabulary. Among them are some very familiar words: AIM, BARGAIN, BICYCLE, CERTAINTY, CRUSH, DELIGHT, ENJOY, FAME, GORGEOUS, HAVOC, NAVY, OINTMENT, RIOT, SCORN, TRACK, to instance but a very few. All these and many more – about two of every three in the group – are so true to their origins that they have the meaning or one of the meanings of the French word from which they come.

Others have diverged, sometimes in striking fashion, as is shown in the following passage of not too intelligible prose:

> 'Watson, could you get up there?'
>
> The doctor looked up at the open LOUVRE high on the steep roof.
>
> 'At my age, Holmes?'
>
> 'Quite right, Watson. Our burglar was a HARLOT, for certain. So the locked doors and windows were no TUITION. Indoors an empty GINGERBREAD jar lay on the kitchen table. Someone had GLUTTED the contents, spilling some and staining the BLANKET. There were sticky fingerprints on the PEW of the stairs and the door of the EASEMENT. Upstairs the contents of the cupboards had been PARGETTED on the floor, with some SQUASHED ornaments. The bath was SURROUNDING: both taps were running.
>
> 'Senseless!', exclaimed Watson.
>
> 'Our man was in a pique', said Holmes, 'and I think I know why. He AWARDED in all the cupboards but missed that old BUDGET ENCROACHED in the corner. Have a look inside.'
>
> Watson opened it. MOOCHED under some PELF was a pile of glittering jewels. Holmes needed only one glance: 'The Osmondiston ADAMANTS, Lady Julia's CHEAT. What a good job our man was disturbed so that he had to WINCE at some RANDOM. Though he would always have had a job to ESTRANGE them.'

To restore sense to this hitherto unpublished extract from the great detective's case book all that is needed is to substitute for the Frenglish words in capitals the meanings of the Old French words from which they originate, as follows:

Frenglish	Old French	Old French Meaning
LOUVRE	lovier	skylight
HARLOT	herlot	young man
TUITION	tuition	protection
GINGERBREAD	gingembras	ginger jam
GLUT	glotir	swallow
BLANKET	blanchet	white cloth
PEW	puie	handrail
EASEMENT	aisement	lavatory
PARGET	pargeter	throw out
SQUASH	esquasser	break
SURROUND	soronder	overflow
AWARD	esgarder	look
BUDGET	bougette	small bag

Frenglish	Old French	Old French Meaning
ENCROACH	encrochier	hang up
MOOCH	mucier	hide
PELF	pelfre	old clothes
ADAMANT	adamant	diamond
CHEAT	escheoite	inheritance
WINCE	guenchir	escape
RANDOM	randon	speed
ESTRANGE	estrangier	dispose of

The everyday use of so many words among the 400 in this Frenglish group, whether they retain the original meaning or diverge from it, inevitably raises the question: 'How do the French manage without them?' In most cases simply by using a synonym. When they gave up *conquereor* William I had to make do with a gerund, as *Guillaume le Conquérant. Despoir* which lives on in Frenglish as DESPAIR, might have been replaced in French by *desesperacion,* now DESPERATION, or *desperance* or *desesperement*, so rich was Old French in cognate synonyms. All three have been dropped. Yet another, *déséspérance,* lives on but is branded *'littéraire'*. The survivor in current use is *désespoir.* When *maistrie*, Villon's word* and the one that survives in Frenglish as MASTERY, was dropped, *maîtrise* was there to live on into modern French. Similarly *obéissant* and *obéissance* took over when *obedient* and *obedience* were abandoned in French, surviving only in Frenglish.

Sometimes, to complicate the situation, the cognate surviving in French is found in Frenglish as well: ENCUMBERMENT, INTENTION and TOURNEY are there alongside ENCUMBRANCE, INTENT and TOURNAMENT, which have not survived in French. But elsewhere in French cognates went by the board as well as the word itself: *destorbance* had *destorbe, destorbier* and *destorbement* but all four have gone and DISTURBANCE is translated variously by *troubles, tapage, dérangement.*

Some Frenglish words discarded in French thrived so well in English that the French had second thoughts and took them back, usually with their English spelling: *auburn, bacon, briefing, budget, compost, festival, haddock, jury, pedigree, performance, rail, set, spleen, squatter, stress, ticket, verdict.* Sometimes the English spelling has been changed: *interférer, partenaire, popeline. Poney* looks like another in this category: in fact the English word was spelt with an 'e' when it was first recorded in French in 1824. The English changed their spelling later in the century. *Confort* already existed in French in bookish use only and kept that spelling when it was given the sense of COMFORT.

French preserves the English meaning of the words instanced above. With others only a limited English use took the word back: *basket* as an abbreviation for BASKETBALL; *challenge* as 'tournament for a CHALLENGE cup' and later the cup itself. *Corner* was also limited to its football sense at first, the commodity market one followed. *Intercourse* is used only in connection with trade agreements. *Record* was originally confined to sport ('best performance') but, almost inevitably, later became 'remarkable event'. *Set* likewise was first used in its tennis sense only but now serves for tablemats, a film set and, in psychology, a predisposition. *Trip* remains limited to its 'taking of drugs' sense.

In French some of these words have displayed the usefulness which marks them out in English and now have offshoots of their own which owe nothing to English. *Briefing,* in English a gerund, has been given a French verb, *briefer.* Since its first recorded appearance in French in 1764 a whole series of words has been created round *budget,* among them *budgétaire, budgétiser* and the charming *budgétivore ('Celui qui émarge au budget de L'Etat.'). Compost* has *composter* and *compostage.* If you attend a *festival* you are a *festivalier* or *–ière.* A system or apparatus with a good *performance* is said to be *performant.* Among the several words based on *rail dérailler* was soon a necessity and produced another Frenglish word DERAIL. *Dérailleur* the gear changing device for bicycles is now also in English (minus its accent). *Stress* has been

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**Prince Jhesus, qui sur tous a maistrie ...*
(L'épitaphe Villon)

given the verb *stresser*, used mainly in the past participle, and the adjective *stressant*. *Basket* naturally led to *basketeur, -euse* and in the vernacular is the name of the anklehigh light boots worn by basketball players. *Record* has two unlikely companions, *recordman* and *recordwoman*, to translate RECORD HOLDER. FADE deserves a mention here: its Old French root *fader* has been lost in modern French though *fade*, the related adjective, survives. The Frenglish verb has not returned to French as such but has given two nouns, *fadissement*, of colours, and *fading*, originally of wireless signals, later taken up by Aragon in his memorable *Zone Libre: 'Fading de la tristesse . . .'*

Opportunities are there for other Frenglish words to be usefully employed back in French. BLANKET would take some of the burden off *couverture*, ACQUAINTANCE off *connaissance*, RELINQUISH and WAIVE off *renoncer* and *abandonner*, REMAIN and STAY off *rester* and *demeurer*. PEWTER would remove the confusion about *étain*, which means 'tin' as well. REHEARSE would provide actors and musicians with a more distinctive word than *répéter*. It is more convenient to say ARSON than *incendie volontaire* or *incendie criminel*. LUNGE than *faire un mouvement brusque en avant*, RIOT than *manifester avec violence* or *faire une émeute*, WAIF is shorter, more emotive perhaps, than *enfant abandonné* or *enfant miserable*. On its own *tressaillir* does not convey the idea of pain that goes with WINCE. AGOG suggests a stronger feeling than *en émoi*.

STORE would be handier than *grand magasin* but would have to overcome the existence of *store*, the blind. And *drugstore* is already known in French to confuse the issue. But, with the logical form *survoir* to avoid a clash with *surveiller*, SURVEY would conveniently replace *embrasser du regard* or *passer en revue*. MATRIMONY would provide the noun that *matrimonial* lacks. *Quiet* in bookish use only and *nuisance* in an environnental one are in the French dictionaries waiting for the many applications of QUIET and NUISANCE. Another word showing its obvious French stock with -ance, PARLANCE, would usefully supplement *langage* and perhaps even replace the verbal noun *parler*, for all that Montaigne made such good use of it: *'Le parler que j'aime, c'est un parler simple et naïf . . .'*

With their impeccable French origins these words would have the added appeal of not being just *franglais*. Not that the process of return would be a studied one. Someone would simply pick a word because it seemed to fill a gap or to be particularly smart or convenient. The start would almost certainly be in colloquial speech and the young, who like to have an idiom of their own, would be in the lead. Paying scant heed to the urgings of governments, academics and academicians the French young have long shown great inventiveness in creating new words, modifying existing ones and their meanings and importing from abroad. They prefer short words to the long ones their elders favour. It marks the generation gap: *'Entre les jeunes et nous il y aura toujours trois phonèmes'*, one parent said. So if they were looking for Frenglish words to fill a gap *les jeunes* might choose ARSON, LUNGE or RIOT. But they have always made up their own minds and it is just as likely that, with no regard for the French equivalents, they would take up HUGE, NICE or QUAINT for their unmistakable Anglo-American flavour.

News and Notes

Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français

IXe Congrès de la FIPF (Tokyo du 25 au 31 août 1996)

Appel aux intervenants du Congrès mondial

I) Choisissez une thématique

Présentez une proposition d'intervention personelle s'inscrivant dans l'une ou l'autre des deux thématiques annoncées:

1) Travailler/étudier en français
2) Les cultures en français

II) Choisissez une rubrique

Votre intervention doit s'inscrire dans l'une des trois rubriques de chaque thématique.

A – Réflexion

Concerne les interventions qui tentent de faire le point sur l'état de la recherche dans un certain nombre de domaines et qui privilégient une dimension prospective.

B – Formation

Concerne les interventions qui traiteront de tous les aspects de la formation initiale et continue des enseignants de français, des relations de la formation et des publics à former (âge, nombre, niveau, culture, etc.), de la formation de formateurs.

C – Défense et illustration

Offre aux intervenants l'occasion de présenter leurs expériences ou leur matériel pédagogique. Elle concerne également les interventions qui s'inscrivent dans une polémique, les divergences de points de vue et les confrontations.

III) Choisissez la forme de votre intervention

Enfin, vous pouvez choisir la forme d'intervention qui vous paraît la mieux adaptée parmi celles qui sont mentionnées ci-dessous.

L'unité de temps prévue pour chaque intervention est de une heure trente. Mais celle-ci est bien sûr modulable, sauf pour les conférences.

a – Conférence

Prévue pour une durée d'une heure devant quelques cinq cents personnes, elle fait le point des travaux d'un spécialiste de renom sur un problème donné entrant dans la thématique du Congrès.

b – Table ronde

Elle rassemble pendant une heure et demie, quatre à cinq intervenants devant un public d'environ trois cents personnes. La table-ronde offre à divers spécialistes l'occasion de débattre avec le public d'un sujet donné, chaque intervenant représentant un aspect particulier du thème abordé.

c – Atelier

Il permet à un groupe d'une vingtaine de personnes sous la responsabilité d'un animateur, d'approfondir en commun un sujet donné. Il donne aux participants l'occasion de se livrer à des activités pratiques. Celles-ci peuvent se dérouler en une séance ou durant un cycle de plusieurs séances. L'atelier peut déboucher sur la production de matériel, de documents, de textes, de démarches pédagogiques.

d – Convergence

Il s'agit d'une communication orale de trente minutes présentée individuellement. Elle donne l'occasion aux congressistes qui le désirent de présenter leurs expériences, les moyens d'enseignement qu'ils ont élaborés, le résultat de leurs travaux ou de leurs recherches. Ces interventions seront regroupées thématiquement par trois.

e – Forum

Manifestation organisée par les commissions régionales et mettant en évidence un continent, une région, par exemple, «forum africain», «forum asiatique», «forum latino-américain», etc. Des précisions seront fournies ultérieurement par le Conseil d'Administration de la F.I.P.F.

IV) Adressez vos propositions d'interventions avant le 30 juin 1995 au:
Comité d'Organisation du IXe Congrès mondial de la FIPF.
«Albergo» 305, Kanda-Surugadaï, 2-1-19, Chiyoda-ku TOKYO (101) JAPON
téléphone: (81-3) 3233-4067
télécopieur: (81-3) 3233-4047

Enseigner avec TV5

Les médias jouent dans la création d'un environnement francophone, un rôle qu'il serait superflu de souligner : motivation indéniable, parce qu'ils sont parfois l'unique contact qu'un apprenant entretient avec la langue française, ils apportent aussi aux enseignants une matière vivante, actuelle qu'ils peuvent utiliser dans les cours.

Nous avons demandé à Martine Cauvin de nous présenter les émissions qui, de son propre point de vue et de celui des télespectateurs qui se sont maintes fois exprimés sur cette question, sont les plus utilisables pour l'enseignement apparentissage du français.

Chaîne francophone, généraliste et multinationale, TV5 a l'ambition de contribuer à la progression du français dans le monde. Dans cette perspective, outre des méthodes de langue telles que VICTOR, la chaîne diffuse à la fois des émissions sur la langue française et des émissions susceptibles d'être utilisées pour l'enseignement du français, langue étrangère :

– «Hexagone», une émission expérimentale destinée à ceux qui apprennent ou enseignent le français.

– «Correspondance», le magazine des télespectateurs de TV5 qui propose un jeu sur les expressions idiomatiques et, crée un lieu de rencontre avec les télespectateurs, font partie de la première catégorie.

Les choix du monde éducatif

D'autres émissions peuvent être utilisées pour l'enseignement du français, langue étrangère, même si elles n'étaient pas a priori destinées à cet usage: les relations entre TV5 et le monde éducatif permettent en effet d'identifier les émissions susceptibles d'être exploitées à des fins éducatives. Cette liste est établie à partir des témoignages spontanés (courrier de télespectateurs enseignants) et des manifestations provoquées par TV5. On peut citer:

– Les émissions brèves, qui sont plus facilement utilisables car elles présentent une cohérence qu'il est difficile d'obtenir avec des extraits d'émissions plus longues.

«Carrefours», qui a pour objectif de rendre compte d'un fait culturel présenté en quelques minutes, permet une exploitation sur le double plan de la langue et de la civilisation.

«Clins d'œil», qui présente brièvement un sujet national ou international.

«La Cuisine des Mousquetaires» émission «culinaire» où la désignation d'objets et d'ingredients précis et l'évocation de gestes semblent utiles aux enseignants de français, langue étrangère, C'est aussi un accès aux produits et habitudes culinaires de Sud-Ouest (les cassettes vidéo sont disponibles à France 3 Aquitaine)

"Orient sur Seine", qui présente une personnalité appartenant à la culture arabe.

– Les jeux linguistiques et culturels tels que:

«Questions pour un Champion» qui fait appel à la culture générale et permet à chacun d'entre nous de confronter ses connaissances, de tester sa rapidité, ses réflexes et de s'amuser tout en s'instruisant. C'est une demi-heure de gymnastique d'esprit, dans tous les domaines du savoir: cinéma, littérature, sciences, art, histoire, géographie, technique, gastronomie, botanique, mythologie, etc . . .

«Quelle histoire» qui consiste à raconter une histoire en intégrant une liste de mots proposés.

– Les émissions d'information:

Le journal télévisé de TV5 à 18 h 30: la durée de l'échange entre le présentateur et l'invité permet une réelle exploitation de l'interview. Ce journal privilégie l'information internationale pour rétablir un certain équilibre par rapport à la rediffusion de journaux qui fournissent forcément leur actualité nationale; d'autre part, il mobilise des invités que l'on n'a pas l'habitude de voir sur les autres chaînes et leur donne le temps de traiter en profondeur des sujets d'actualité.

Le magazine «Référence» en donnant la parole pendant presque 30 minutes à l'invité favorise un travail sur le discours.

La référence sera un personnage, un homme ou une femme, une vie, c'est à dire un parcours, une route, c'est une expérience.

Contrairement aux événements, à la mode, aux idées d'un jour et aux circonstances, la référence dure, demeure et reste.

Des jours, des semaines, des mois, des années après les événements, on consulte la référence, on la réécoute ou on la relit, même si parfois on la conteste.

Cette référence, toujours francophone, appartient indifféremment au monde politique, scientifique, artistique.

– Certaines émissions permettant d'aborder le français de spécialité :

Le magazine «Connaissance de la Science» ainsi que le magazine «Côté Science» permettent de se familiariser avec le français, langue scientifique.

«Connaissance de la Science» est un magazine scientifique de 55 minutes coproduit par Caméras continentales et l'AUPELF-UREF, réalisé par Jack Cohen et animé par Paul Amar, le présentateur du journal télévisé de 20 heures sur France 2.

Cette émission scientifique est diffusée par TV5 chaque second vendredi du mois, à 10 h 00.

L'objet de «Connaissance de la Science» consiste à concilier compétence et vulgarisation, à instaurer une médiation entre ceux qui ont et font le savoir et les spectateurs, en un mot à rendre accessible au plus grand nombre le message parfois hermétique des scientifiques.

L'émission comprend trois grandes parties :

Une première séquence essentiellement didactique retrace l'histoire du domaine scientifique considéré.

Une deuxième partie fait intervenir des représentants du monde scientifique d'aujourd'hui (les entretiens individuels entre l'animateur et trois scientifiques venus respectivement des continents africain, américain et européen sont étayés de courts métrages);

Un débat, au cours duquel d'autres invités confrontent leur point de vue sur des questions qui mêlent science et éthique, constitue la dernière séquence.

Les dernières émissions diffusées ont traité des sujets suivants: les greffes d'organes, l'ordinateur, le cerveau, la mer, la démographie, le big bang.

Dans ce même créneau, TV5 rediffuse des émissions exploitables pour l'ensiegnement de diverses disciplines en France et hors de France présentées sur d'autres chaînes.

– Questions politiques, économiques et sociales :

TF1 : 7/7

FRANCE 2 : L'heure de vérité, Envoyé spécial

FRANCE 3 : Magazine européen, Faut pas rêver, La marche du siècle . . .

– Histoire et géographie :

FRANCE 3 : Thalassa (magazine de la mer), Montagne (magazine des sommets), Les brûlures de l'histoire (magazine d'analyse de l'actualité à la lumière de événements historiques)

FRANCE 2 : Géopolis (magazine de géopolitique)

RTBF : Jours de guerre (magazine historique)

– Emissions culturelles et littéraires :

TF1: Ex-libris

FRANCE 2 : Bouillon de culture , le cercle de minuit

FRANCE 3 : Ah! quels titres

– Emissions scientifiques et médicales :

TF1 : Santé à la une

FRANCE 2 : Diagnostic (volet «santé» de l'émission «Savoir plus» présenté par François de Closets) . . .

Un accés de facilité

Par ailleurs, s'addressant à un public étranger, TV5 a le souci constant de rendre ses émissions plus accessibles, sans entamer leur authenticité.

– L'habillage de la chaîne et l'auto-promotion à l'antenne:

les programmes sont présentés sur des pages écrites lues en voix off.

– Le sous-titrage en français:

le film programmé le dimanche soir à 21 h 30 et rediffusé le mardi à 13 h 40.

– Les émissions qui intègrent l'écrit :

L'eurotourisme

Les *flashes d'information* dont la compréhension est facilitée par l'écriture et l'illustration, quatre fois par jour.

Les revues de la presse écrite francophone

– MEDIASUD, revue de la presse des pays arabes,
– la revue de la presse hebdomadaire,
– la revue de la presse africaine,
– la revue de la presse québécoise.

– Le télétexte

TV5 diffuse depuis le 22 février 1993 sur le même canal satellite, et parallèlement à ses émissions de télévision, un deuxième programme permanent: «TV5–TXT». Ce magazine télétexte permet à tout téléspectateur, recevant TV5 aux normes PAL et équipé d'un décodeur adéquat, de consulter quand il le souhaite toutes sortes d'informations vidéographiques qui décrivent le contenu quotidien ou hebdomadaire des émissions, ou parlent de la bourse, de la météo, du sport, de l'économie, du tourisme, de l'enseignement du français, etc.

Qui peut recevoir TXT–TV5?

Près de la moitié du parc des téléviseurs installés en Europe est désormais équipé de décodeurs télétexte aux normes Ceefax. Entre 8 et 10 millions de téléspectateurs de TV5 ont ainsi accès à tout moment aux informations diffusées par TV5–TXT

Martine Cauvin – Conseillère du Président de TV5

Initiative

Pour contribuer à la progression du français dans le monde. TV5 vous propose **d'enregistrer et d'utiliser au sein de vos associations** à des fins exclusivement pédagogiques son journal télévise à 18 h 30, heure de Paris (la durée de l'échange entre le présentateur et l'invité permet une réelle exploitation de l'interview) ainsi que ses revues de presse française, arabe et africaine, (l'intégration de l'écrit à l'écran est susceptible de faciliter la compréhension du propos).

D'autre part, les membres des associations affiliées à la FIPF pourront **produire et diffuser des documents d'accompagnement sur ces mêmes émissions.**

Sous réserve d'un accord avec les producteurs d'autres émissions, la liste sera progressivement élargie.

As reported in Issue No. 10 (Dec. 1994) p. 40 Michael Buckby presents Un échange télématique

Comment c'est, votre collège?

Voici des jeunes qui ont le même âge que vous, mais qui vont au collège dans différents pays. Faites leur connaissance et apprenez comment c'est, la vie chez eux.

Je m'appelle Jurgen et je vais à l'école à Bonn. J'habite à 15 km de l'école. Je viens à l'école en car, et j'arrive à 8 h moins 10. Ma journée à l'école finit à 1 h 30! Je rentre chez moi et je prends le déjeuner. Ensuite, je fais mes devoirs: j'ai entre deux et trois heures de devoirs par jour. Je les fais souvent à la bibliothèque municipale. A part les matières normales, j'ai deux heures de musique et deux heures de dessin par semaine. Je dois apporter beaucoup d'affaires à l'école!

Moi, je m'appelle Maria, j'ai 16 ans et je vais à l'école à Madrid. J'habite près de l'école et j'y viens à pied. Les cours commencent à 9 heures et ils finissent à 5 heures de l'après-midi. Le soir, je dois apprendre mes leçons, mais je n'ai pas d'autres devoirs. Souvent, le soir, je lave les casseroles et les poêles. Chez nous, la musique est obligatoire. Le directeur et les professeurs sont toujours très gentils.

Moi, je m'appelle Joop, et je vais au lycée à Amsterdam. Je viens au lycée à vélo. J'arrive au lycée vers 9 h moins le quart et je le quitte d'habitude à 4 h. A midi, nous avons une heure et demie pour déjeuner. Nous faisons beaucoup de travaux manuels et de gymnastique: notre lycée a une très grande salle de gymnastique et un laboratoire de langues modernes. La directrice et les professeurs sont bien gentils, en général.

Salut! Je m'appelle Anne, et je vais au collège à Washington, DC. Je viens à l'école en car. Nos cours commencent à 9 h et durent jusqu'à 3 h et demie. Je déjeune au collège. Nous n'avons pas de cantine, alors je mange des sandwichs que j'apporte de chez moi. Je ne fais pas de devoirs, le soir. Il y a deux mille élèves dans notre collège. Comme presque tous mes copains, j'ai un job, le soir: je fais du baby-sitting ou je fais le ménage chez les voisins pour gagner un peu d'argent de poche. Et toi?

Moi, je m'appelle Paul et je vais au collège dans une banlieue de Londres. J'y vais en métro. Il y a une station tout près de mon collège. Les cours durent de 9 h du matin jusqu'à 4 h de l'après-midi. A midi, je déjeune à la cantine et je joue dans la cour avec les copains. Je prends le goûter chez moi,.à 5h. En Angleterre, les élèves n'ont pas de devoirs. Nous faisons trois heures de sport par semaine, surtout du badminton (tous les jeunes Anglais sont fous du badminton!).

Bonjour! Je m'appelle Anita, et je vais à l'école à Rome. J'habite à 20 minutes à pied de l'école. J'ai des cours le matin, mais je suis libre l'après-midi. Notre école est ouverte l'après-midi, pour d'autres élèves. Nous sommes presque deux mille en tout. Personne ne passe toute la journée à l'école chez nous. Mais quel travail, une fois rentrée à la maison! Nous avons beaucoup de devoirs!

A partir de cette page d'Action, Livre 4 (Nelson, 1983) les élèves apprennent à lire un document authentique et à chercher des erreurs (puisqu'il y en a ici, comme c'est souvent le cas dans des articles de presse). En discutant de chaque photo et de chaque texte, les élèves apprennent aussi à faire des comparaisons entre leur vie scolaire et celle d'autres jeunes dans d'autres pays, avec l'aide, si c'est nécessaire, des questions du professeur, par exemple:

– Vous êtes arrivé à l'école à quelle heure, ce matin?

– Comment êtes-vous venu à l'école?

– Jurgen (etc.) est allé à l'école comment, ce matin?

– Il est parti de chez lui vers quelle heure?

– Et vous?

– Où êtes-vous allé pour manger, à midi?

Beaucoup d'élèves ont déjà visité d'autres pays et ont fait des échanges scolaires. On peut les encourager à utiliser ces expériences, par exemple:

– Vous avez déjà été à une école en Allemagne?

– Vous connaissez des jeunes Espagnols?

– D'après ce que vous savez, est-ce que cette information est correcte?

A la suite de ces discussions, les élèves sont en mesure de corriger les erreurs dans cet article et d'écrire des descriptions correctes.

Un article comme celui-ci incite aussi à comparer des systèmes différents et à rêver à un système idéal. C'est le moment idéal pour l'introduction du courrier électronique: les élèves ont maintenant les moyens linguistiques et une bonne raison communicative pour présenter une image correcte de leur école et aussi pour demander aux jeunes dans d'autres pays de leur présenter leurs écoles à eux.

Ce dernier point est très important. Grâce au réseau électronique, les élèves de tous les pays peuvent et veulent poser des questions et inviter des réponses. Dans beaucoup de classes, les élèves passent beaucoup de temps à répondre à des questions (et risquent parfois de devenir presque des répondeurs automatiques) mais ils passent trop peu de temps à poser des questions, surtout de *vraies* questions qu'ils posent parce qu'ils ne connaissent pas la réponse mais que celle-ci les intéresse véritablement. Les échanges télématiques encouragent, mieux peut-être que toute autre technique, à provoquer des questions et à penser aux façons les plus efficaces de poser des questions. Les élèves apprennent vite que les questions ouvertes (comme, par exemple, «Vous voulez bien nous parler un peu de votre ville et de ce que vous en pensez?») provoquent des réponses plus individualisées et plus intéressantes que les questions fermées (comme, par exemple, «Est-ce que vous aimez votre ville?»).

Cet exemple illustre l'énorme avantage que les échanges télématiques offrent. Chaque professeur de langues essaie d'aider ses élèves à comprendre qu'un bon écrivain prend toujours en compte pourquoi et pour qui il écrit. Ce sont des concepts fondamentaux qui influencent, par exemple, le contenu, le style et la façon de présenter ce qu'on écrit. Il n'y a rien de mieux que les échanges télématiques pour s'attirer un vrai public s'intéressant à ce que l'on écrit et aussi un public qui réagit rapidement et en fonction de ce qu'on a écrit. Les élèves apprennent très vite que certaines questions, par exemple, produisent l'effet voulu alors que d'autres n'aboutissent qu'à des réponses inintéressantes.

L'existence de ce public réel qui lit et qui réagit à ce qu'on écrit présente un autre avantage important: il présente une raison convaincante pour faire un grand effort pour produire des textes qui sont bien présentés et sans fautes. Les professeurs encouragent souvent leurs élèves à faire un effort pour éliminer, autant qu'ils le peuvent, des fautes d'orthographe et grammaticales. Mais pour beaucoup de jeunes il y a une motivation encore plus forte que les encouragements de leurs professeurs, c'est le fait que ce qu'ils écrivent sera lu par d'autres jeunes et que ceux-ci risquent de ne pas comprendre ou de ne pas prendre au sérieux des messages qui seraient pleins de fautes. Cela explique pourquoi les professeurs participants ont été d'accord pour encourager leurs élèves à considérer les messages qu'ils envoient comme des textes publiés et donc, en principe, corrects.

Il serait très difficile de bien présenter son école, sa ville et sa région par le seul moyen des messages électroniques. Et ce n'est pas un des objectifs d'un échange télématique d'exclure ou même de réduire d'autres moyens d'échanges. Au contraire un objectif important est de se servir des échanges télématiques pour susciter des échanges de toutes les sortes: par exemple, télécopies et lettres, photos, brochures (de son école, sa ville et sa région) par courrier normal. Nous espérons, en effet, que beaucoup de classes vont échanger les brochures de leurs écoles, de leurs villes et de leurs régions. Ce simple geste entraînerait des conséquences importantes:

- Puisque les brochures sont écrites dans la langue locale, elles pourront contribuer d'une façon non négligeable à la sensibilisation langagière des élèves qui les reçoivent: un jeune britannique, par exemple, qui trouverait dans une brochure danoise des mots danois qu'il reconnaîtrait parce qu'ils ressemblent à des mots anglais serait amené à réfléchir sur les origines et la nature des langues et des cultures de l'Europe.

- Une autre conséquence du fait que les brochures sont écrites dans la langue locale qui, dans le contexte de ce réseau dans lequel le français est la langue que les participants ont en commun, ne sera pas connue par le public à qui on va l'envoyer, est que ceux qui l'envoient sont encore une fois (voir ci-dessus) obligés de penser à leur public et aux besoins de ce public. Ils trouveraient peut-être la solution de mettre sur chaque page de la brochure un auto-collant sur lequel ils auraient écrit un résumé en français du texte. Un excellent exercice linguistique et culturel.

- Mais l'exercice culturel ne s'arrête pas là! Parce qu'il se trouve que, dans chacun des pays partenaires, les brochures d'écoles sont différentes et que les différences reflètent d'une manière très intéressante des différences culturelles fondamentales. En Angleterre, par exemple, les écoles secondaires pratiquent la «politique du marché» qui est la politique primordiale du gouvernement: chaque école est en concurrence avec les autres de la région et fait tout pour attirer des élèves (et avec eux les subventions financières qui s'ensuivent) au détriment des écoles voisines, comme le feraient par exemple deux magasins pour attirer des clients. Les brochures de ces écoles ressemblent donc aux dépliants des magasins Lafayette: de le publicité professionnelle, de haute qualité et en quadrichromie. Une classe en Belgique, par exemple, qui recevrait une

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telle brochure et qui serait surprise par les différences entre celle-ci et la brochure, beaucoup plus simple, de leur école aurait un exemple très concret et très frappant d'un aspect culturel d'un autre pays européen.

Et cela sert d'exemple pour notre objectif primordial: les échanges télématiques servent surtout et avant tout à éduquer les jeunes pour une Europe Unie... car tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner.

MICHAEL BUCKBY,
Université d'York
Co-ordinateur pour le Royaume-Uni

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Books and Materials received

The following books and materials have been received from the publishers. Titles marked * are available for review by telephoning 0113 267 9258 after 6 p.m.

* **The French Experience.** BBC. Published August 1994 and transmitted from October 1994, this is a new multi-media course for beginners. There are twenty 15-minute TV and sixteen 30-minute radio programmes.

Course book	*ISBN 0 563 36781 4*	*£10.99*
2 audio cassettes	*ISBN 0 563 399023* *ISBN 0 563 399024*	*£12.99 each*
4 CD's	*ISBN 0 563 39903 1*	*£35.00*
activity book	*ISBN 0 563 39901 5*	*£ 4.99*
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tutor's cassettes	*ISBN 0 563 39936 8*	*£14.99*
The French Experience language pack	*ISBN 0 563 39910 4*	*£37.50*

Available from Exel – Logistics Media Services, Invicta House, St. Thomas Longley Road, Medway City Estate, Rochester, Kent ME2 4DU

* **Le français de la communication professionnelle.** M. Danilo and J-L Penfornis. *Clé International.*

Student's book	*ISBN 0 9456*	*£9.50*
Key	*ISBN 0 947*	*NYP*
Cassette	*ISBN 0 9458*	*£14.95 + VAT (not sent for review)*

Business communication: telephone, letters, bills and payments, etc.

* **A l'écoute des professionnels.** Monique Lebre-Peytard *Clé International.*

Student's book	*ISBN 09070*	*£7.15*
Cassette	*ISBN 09071*	*£18.50 + VAT (not sent for review)*

For students who are already at an advanced level. Sections on banking, fashion, tourism, agriculture, telecommunications, etc. :

* **Les combinés du téléphone**. J. Lamoureux. *Presses Universitaires de Grenoble. ISBN 2 7061 0516 X. £6.50.* For students who are training towards a career in commerce, marketing, etc. All aspects of dealing with the telephone for non-native speakers. Cassette available but not sent for review.

* **Scénarios professionnels.** Jacques Blanc, Jean-Michel Cartier and Pierre Lederlin. *Clé International.*

Level 1

Student's book	*ISBN 2 09033505*	*X*	*£7.95*
Livret d'exercice	*ISBN 2 09033125*	*9*	*£4.95*

There are also cassettes and a teacher's book, but these last have not been sent for review.

* **Le français à grande vitesse.** S. Truscott, M. Mitchell and B. Tauzin. *Hachette. ISBN 009242. £ 10.95.*

An intensive course with a business background.

* **Fréquence Jeunes.** G. Capelle, M. Cavalli and N. Gidon. *Hachette.*

Student's book	*ISBN 000175*	*£7.80*
Cahier d'exercice	*ISBN 000741*	*£4.45*

Méthode de français pour adolescents.

* **Soleil.** Eliane Papo and Iva Cintrat. *Didier/Hatier.*

Student's book part 1.	*ISBN*	*000680*	*£8.95*
Cahier d'exercice part 1.	*ISBN*	*000681*	*£3.95*
Student's book part 2.	*ISBN*	*000683*	*£9.95.*

Méthode de français pour pré-adolescents et adolescents.

* **Mosaïque. Part 2.** Béatriz Job. *Clé International*

Student's book	*ISBN 2 09033130 5*	*£8.95*
Cahier d'exercice	*ISBN 2 09033131 3*	*£5.25*

Méthode de français pour grands adolescents et adultes débutants.

Bienvenue. Rose Vaillancourt-David, 9

Ranulf Croft, Coventry. CV3 5FB. ISBN 0 9520804 0 0. £14.95.
A complete French course for those over 16. Suited to industry, colleges and universities. There are also notes for teachers and two cassettes, one on tenses and one on numbers, price £5.75 each.

* **Encore Tricolore Part 3.** Sylvia Honnor, Heather Mascie-Taylor and Alan Wesson. *Nelson.* Completing the KS3 material, the new series combines familiar material and learning style with a lively approach to the national curriculum.

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* **L'Analyse du Texte.** Rosalia Colombo Ascari and Marie-Thérèse Killiam. *Austin and Winfield.*
ISBN 1 880921 57 X. £35.95 (paperback)
Etude de la langue et de la culture françaises par le texte.

* **Eurolab : Français-plus.** Oliver Gray. *Revilo Language Cards, P.O. Box 71, Winchester, SO23 8VL.*
ISBN 1 897609 65 5. £ 60, including transcript.
A new Advanced level self-service listening library, with 20 short cassettes, cards with French and English tasks, answer cards and transcript, covering such topics as pollution, AIDS, unemployment, etc.

* **Travail d'instit.** R. Birks and M. Garabedian. *Didier/Hatier. Collection Crédif.*

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The training of French teachers in the primary sector.

* **Voici la France.** Duncan Sidwell, Martine Bénitez and Bernard Kavanagh. *Chancerel. ISBN 0 905703 96 0. £6.95.*
A new addition to the 'En France' series. A monolingual background reader with an integrated workbook. Cassette and CD available but not sent for review.

La géographie de l'Europe des 12. P. Joint, J-P Courbon, M. Pauline et J. C. Viau. *Nathan. ISBN 002092 . £8.95.*
From the 'Repères Pratiques' series, this is a detailed survey with maps and graphs of the countries in the Community.

Dossiers France Télévision. Graham Bishop, Peter Dyson and Valerie Worth – Stylianou. *John Murray.*

Video cassette (70 Minutes)	*ISBN 0 71957107 3*	*£30.00+ VAT*
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Twenty selected contemporary 'clips' from the France 2, complementary extracts from the French press and a copy-right waived cassette for home study. (This last not sent for review.)

* **French Grammar - Your Guide.** Val Levick, Glenise Radford and Alasdair McKeane. *Malvern Language Guides, P.O. Box 76, Malvern WR4 2YP.*
ISBN 1 898219 50 8. £3.00.
For KS 3 and 4 but Lower Sixth students would also find this book a useful source of basic grammar.

* **A Vos Marques.** Janet Irwin and Séverine Guillois. *AVM concepts Ltd. P.O. Box 263, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2YS. A set of 8 cassettes for younger children:*

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£6.50 each or a complete set for £50, including P and P. Also available from WH Smith.

* **Languages for the International Scientist.** Edited by Gabrielle Parker and Catherine Reuben. *CILT. ISBN 1 874016 31 3. £9.50 + 1.70 postage from CILT Mail Order, P.O. Box 8, Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 4ZB or FAX 0559 370464.*

Current debate on the the place of languages in the science curriculum, especially in higher education.

* **Cadences.** D. Berger and R. Mérieux. Hatier /Didier.
Livre de l'élève. ISBN 9 782278 0 4319 4 £7.25
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Méthode de français destinée à des adolescents et à des adultes débutants.

* **Get by in French.** Pierrick Picot. *BBC Books.*
Book and two cassettes ISBN 0 563 39956 2 £12.99.
A quick course for beginners, suitable for holiday makers and business people.

* **The New Oxford Companion to French Literature.** Edited by Peter France. *Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1995. ISBN 0 19 866125 8. £30.00.*
The literature of France and French-speaking countries, by a team of international specialists. This is an entirely new work, not a revised edition of the previous Companion.

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* **Le Français, c'est facile.** Sue Brown and Sue Dean. *John Murray. 1995. ISBN 0 7195 7100 6. £35.00.*
Strategies and resources for Special Needs. A photocopiable resource pack with planning sheet and teaching notes for each module.

* **Le Français, c'est facile.** Elissa Collins. *John Murray. 1995. ISBN 07195 7110 3. £22.00 + £3.00 VAT.*
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* **Télé-Textes.** Elspeth Broady and Ulrike Meinhof. *OUP. 1995.*
VHS video
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There is also a CD-ROM (£70.00 + VAT) but not sent for review. A series of 18 news extracts from Le Journal de 20 Heures. Follow-up activities, transcripts and prepared answers. For A level.

* **La France Aujourd'hui: Readers in Contemporary French Civilisation.** Edited by Claire Laudet and Richard Cox. *Manchester University Press.*
This is a new series, written entirely in French. The first two titles are:
La vie politique en France ISBN 0 7190 4218 6 £9.99 (pb)
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Reviews

Grand Dictionnaire Français-Anglais/Anglais-Français Larousse, *1993. French edition, 2 volumes, 2020 pp excluding atlas and verb tables ISBN 2-03-401300-X. £35.00.*

In the introduction to the *Grand Dictionnaire Larousse* (GDL), the publishers cite their aim as being to meet the following three basic criteria: (1) relevance and comprehensiveness of coverage, (2) ease of use and (3) reliability. To what extent have the international team of lexicographers and publishers been successful in achieving this objective?

The *GDL* contains more than 300,000 words and expressions and over 500,000 translations. Although the *Oxford/Hachette (O/H)* (1994) dictionary has over 350,000 words and phrases, with more than 530,000 translations, the comprehensiveness of its entries cannot match the detail of many of the *GDL* entries. In comparison, the *Collins/Robert (C/R)* (1990) dictionary has substantially fewer entries with approximately 220,000 references, and over 460,000 translations.

One of the many strengths of the *GDL* is its collection of valuable historical and cultural notes and explanations. These will provide both French and English sixth form and university students and their teachers with a mine of information about French and English institutions and conventions. For example, in addition to the entry for **halle** '(covered) market', the *GDL* has a separate entry of ten lines for **Les Halles,** which provides a historical synopsis as well as a description of recent developments. The English-French volume has the following distinct entry for **The British Council** 'Le British Council est chargé de promouvoir la langue et la culture anglaises, et de renforcer les liens culturels avec les autres pays'. In contrast, neither the *O/H* nor the *C/R* dictionaries have specific entries for either of these items.

The comprehensive coverage of the *GDL* dictionary is also reflected in the inclusion of a number of Belgian, Swiss and Canadian-French terms in the French-to-English volume, including *latte* (Belg. – ruler) and *frasil* (Can. – spikes of ice). This is mirrored by the inclusion of a number of American-English terms such as *sidewalk* and *elevator* in the English-French volume, along with entries for South African, Australian, Irish and Scottish-English.

In addition to the comprehensiveness and relevance of the dictionary entries themselves, it is also worth considering the 'extras' which many users of bilingual dictionaries have come to expect. The *GDL* contains useful verb-tables and atlases, but is outdone by the examples of French and English correspondence and the charting of the French, British and American constitutions provided in the *O/H* dictionary. The *GDL* does not have anything comparable to the *C/R's* very useful 72-page section entitled 'Language in use' – a grammar of communication in French and English, arranged thematically, to facilitate self-expression in the foreign language.

The uncomplicated typographical layout of the *GDL* dictionary makes it easy to follow. The phonetic transcriptions and their explanations are clearly laid out, as is the guide to the abbreviations used in the dictionary.

The result of the successful realisation of the aims cited at the beginning of the dictionary is a well-constructed, user-friendly dictionary, with intelligently-researched up-to-date information on different aspects of French and English culture and institutions. A most useful resource for sixth for-

mers and university students and their teachers, I recommend it highly. The dictionary may be obtained from European Schoolbooks Ltd, Freepost GL496, The Runnings, Cheltenham GL51 9BR.
RACHEL HOARE
University of the West of England, Bristol.

Jeunes de France. *Video Profiles. ISBN 0 521 44831 X. Cambridge University Press.*

This video, which incudes six documentary-style films, lasts 80 minutes and is particularly suited to sixth formers who are studying A-level.

In the first film we are introduced to the special school at Carcassonne where pupils as young as 10 are taught the theory and practice of flying planes. In the second film we meet 17 year old Élise who lives on a canal boat on the River Seine with her family. Some of these scenes are rather 'staged' but the film improves as we accompany Élise, with her friends, on an excursion to Eurodisney, where we are introduced to 22 year old Sandrine, who works in the Park and gives us a guided tour. The next film depicts the lives of Pierre, who hopes to become a great chef, and Nathalie, who wants to become a waitress. Both are students at the CFA [Centre de Formation d'Apprentis]. In film four we see Aouïcha Abdallah, 23, a student, who spends his holidays as an enthusiastic director of a *colonie de vacances*. The fifth film follows the progress of Nazik, who studies fashion at ESMOD and who hopes to set up her own business in the *Midi*.

Finally we meet Christophe who works as a presenter for the French cable TV channel, Canal J.

The video includes a transcript of the six films, together with a glossary of key expressions used in each film. No work sheets are included, but it would take no time at all to establish one's own. Each video is short enough to be viewed for pleasure, and then a 'true/false'-type worksheet could be issued. Pupils could work in pairs, completing the answers from memory, after which the film could be viewed again.

This is a valuable resource from which much pleasure and language-learning can be derived.
JENNIFER BLUCK.
Wycombe High School.

Exploring France by Peter Wickert *[ISBN 0 340 586850] Hodder and Stoughton 1994.*

Exploring France is, in essence, a geography resource book which covers twelve main topic areas including France within the EEC, industry, agriculture, the main occupations of the inhabitants, 9 the economy, coal and energy, Paris and the *Midi*.

The titles of each chapter, and the subtitles within these chapters, are translated into French. Each chapter includes a vocabulary list related to the topic discussed. The French vocabulary adds a flavour of authenticity to the study of the geography of France but this book would by no means occupy a prominent position in the Modern Language resources. A reference copy would be appreciated for topic work, but the style of the assignments places this book firmly amongst the geography experts.
JENNIFER BLUCK.
Wycombe High School.

The Changing Voices of Europe. Edited by M. M. Parry, W. V.Davies and R. A. M. Temple. *University of Wales Press. 1994. ISBN 0 7083 1259 4. £35.00 Papers in honour of Professor Glanville Price.*

The collection of articles explores the complex linguistic issues that face Western Europe today. Whilst there are historical studies, the main focus of the volume is on the present and the prospects for the future of languages within a more closely integrated Europe.

In a thoughtful article, giving numbers (frequently estimates only) of speakers for each of the European languages, Giulio Lepschy addresses the question, 'How many languages does Europe need?' His response is to defend the large number of spoken tongues but to appeal for as few written standards as possible. A not dissimilar view is advanced by Rebecca

Posner who argues for some limitation on the number of working languages used by the European Union, whilst not wishing to see a decline in the diversity of European tongues.

Readers of Francophonie will be particularly interested in Malcolm Offord's contribution on 'Protecting the French language'. It seems unnecessary, however, for each of his quotations from French to appear in English translation, given the likely readership of the volume.

Lesser-used languages (as we must learn to call them), such as Breton, Welsh and Piedmontese, receive sympathetic attention. Indeed, the extraordinarily complicated patchwork quilt of Europe is portrayed here with much more than clinical efficiency. Steven Barbour sums it up like this: 'The sheer excitement of diversity in language, as in any area of human experience, can never be offset by some illdefined and dubious gain in efficiency which a monolingual society might experience. The loss of any language, almost like the loss of a species, represents an impoverishment of the world, the loss of a unique means of expression, which can never be regained.'

This wide-ranging book gives a wealth of detail for anyone with an interest in our European linguistic heritage.

H.S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

French for Communication 1979-1990. Roy Dunning. *Multilingual Matters Ltd. 1994. ISBN 1 85359 223 4. £11.95.*

Dr Roy Dunning is an enthusiast. His commitment to communicative language teaching and to the teaching of French in particular is uncompromising.

As Dr Dunning tells us, this book 'is not intended to be a precise history: it is more an attempt to give some idea of the process of curriculum change...' There is no doubt that he succeeds in recording carefully the development of three Levels of graded objectives across a whole ability range for years 7, 8, 9 and of a mode 3 GCSE examination in French.

Every teacher of languages, at whatever level ought to rest his/her approach on a theory of how languages are learned and Dr Dunning gives his readers a brisk review of his own theoretical background.

Early on the author makes clear his views on the value of textbooks. According to Dr Dunning, what they do is 'relieve the teachers of the responsibility of providing learning activities for the pupils they teach by appearing to know better how learning takes place.' The system he evolved was 'an oral dialogue with the class in the learning of vocabulary and structures'. Central to his teaching method is a concern for narrative text. I know from personal observation that pupils respond enthusiastically to the style which he instilled in student teachers at the University of Leicester. It is a method which is very demanding on individual teachers, however.

As a rule teachers are not used to teaching towards specific outcomes (of the type now found in the GNVQ Language Units) and Dr Dunning's argument for what he calls 'assessment syllabuses' was a pioneering one. The assessment techniques he advocates were innovative. Perhaps most useful of all are the Appendices which make up about a third of the book. Here the reader is given sample progress cards and sample tasks for the four language skills.

It is sad to see the brief comment that, 'the climate for cooperation which produced the scheme . . . no longer exists'. Thanks to Dr Dunning, the results of that cooperation are now accessible to a wider circle of teachers of French.

H.S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

La Géographie de l'Europe des 12. P. Joint, J. P. Courbon, M. Pauline, J. C. Viau. *Published by Nathan in the series 'Repères Pratiques Nathan'. 160 pp. ISBN 2 09 177662-7 Available from European Schoolbooks at £8.99.*

Many readers will know the 'Repères Nathan' series, possibly from 'Géographie de la France' or, maybe, from 'Institutions de la France'. Both these books have been available for some time now and they make excellent start-off material for students on a post A level course and possibly for A level students doing a geographical or institutional aspect as part of their course work. There are others in the series, too, which can be very useful for foreign learners of French and, though 'La Grammaire française' is not really one of them, I strongly recommend 'La Communication Orale', 'La Correspondance' and 'L'Histoire de France'.

'La Géographie de l'Europe des 12' continues in the same tradition – not too much reading material and, what there is, well supported by charts, diagrams and maps. The multi-coloured maps are a particularly strong feature being both eye-catching and very informative. The text, though brief, is at least as informative and is well displayed and again well supported by appropriate charts and diagrams.

As you might expect, an attempt to cover 'L'Europe des 12' in 160 pages is bound to be a digest type of coverage. It is, but none the less interesting for that. The interest is perhaps increased by the global approach adopted by the authors. This is not a dreary tramp through 12 countries on a 'capes and bays' principle plus a bit on industries. It is, in fact, a much more cohesive study of different aspects of Europe covering politics, the economy and society very broadly. The book is very readable and provides a vast range of basic information about the E. U. Teachers will find it very useful if they do any kind of European/General Studies with Sixth Formers who do not do languages.

Inevitably a book of this kind dates very rapidly. Originally published in 1991 but only recently received for review, even the title betrays its age and a flip through shows the reader that the DDR is still an entity (see page 21). In fact most figures are based on information collected in the eighties. With this caveat in mind teachers will find a lot of useful and helpful information of a non-statistical kind

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

Mon Echange Scolaire. Val Levick, Glenise Radford, Alasdair McKeane. *Published by Malvern Language Guides, P.O. Box 76, Malvern WR14 2YP. 48pp. ISBN 1 898219 60 5. Price £2.00.*

School visits or school exchanges can be hit-or-miss affairs if not properly prepared for. Here is a little (48 pages) handbook for each participant in an exchange. It should ensure that every pupil going on a French exchange holiday has the basic *vademecum* for survival. After vast experience of helping pupils in difficulty on exchange visits it is my opinion that almost all problems stem from lack of ability to communicate basic needs to the French family. On asking a 15 year old what her penfriend's brother was called I was told 'I don't know and don't know how to ask. *We* just buy petrol at school!' The young lady with a superfluity of petrol would have found the second half of this book a godsend to her. 'Survival in the Language' is a sectionalised list of phrases for use with a French family. It covers greetings (which, incredibly, I have found many pupils don't know), agreeing and sympathising, helping someone, language for when you are in difficulty etc. Oddly it doesn't (so far as I can see) help with 'What's his name?', though there is 'What's your name?' The range of phrases is quite wide and appropriate for school visitors. It's a phrase book and a relevant one.

In addition the first half of the book is interactive. The pupil adds his or her own notes in 'Mon journal' – J'ai vu . . . Je suis allé(e) . . . J'ai acheté . . . J'ai fait . . . J'ai joué . . . All great stuff for practising the Perfect Tense too. I also like the provision for pupils' own observations such as 'Name any TV programmes, videos, films you watched.' 'Which teams do your French family support?' etc. All good leading questions which will ensure the English pupil does more than follow the Yorkshire motto of 'Hear all, see all, say nowt.'

I very much recommend this book. At £2 it won't break anybody's bank and I would suggest that a copy per pupil be budgeted for when giving pupils the overall cost of an exchange. I have also thought about the

format. A booklet like this is certainly the handiest form it could have but I have wondered about the possibility of making the whole thing available on disk with a site licence to copy for school use. It would enable schools to select from the book for particular pupils. Before long, of course, we shall be looking for the CD-ROM version.
ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

Eurolab : Français-plus. Oliver Gray. *Revilo Language Cards. PO Box 71, Winchester, SO23 8LV. ISBN 1 897609 65 5. £60.00.*

I have long enjoyed using Revilo materials, ever since the early days when Oliver Gray first produced his reading pack, *Carte Blanche.* The latest addition to the Revilo family promises to be equally enjoyable.

These new materials have been specifically designed for A level students and are ideal for self-supported study. There are 20 cassettes in the pack, each one lasting about five minutes. They are accompanied by cards with English and French tasks, answer cards, a booklet containing the tapescripts and a record card for the individual student to complete.

Some of the topics are very much in the news, as for example le Tunnel sous la Manche and Le 'Booze-Cruising'. Some are fairly light-hearted, (la télévision, la cuisine française) and others are much more serious, (le SIDA, l'avortement, la drogue, le tabagisme, etc.)

Students are encouraged to listen as and when they need, gradually moving towards the more intensive listening activities required by most A-level examination boards.

The recordings are of very high quality, the voices good, the background noises relevant but unobtrusive. The discussions and interviews are, for the most part, between young people and, therefore, relevant to the audience.

I found this resource to be particularly useful with the Lower Sixth. The passages themselves and the questions in English are quite demanding, but the tasks in the target language less so. Many of the questions in French are of the true/false type, matching up phrases with possible translations or indicating which speaker voiced which opinion. For this kind of material to be useful with an Upper Sixth group, I would want some transcription practice, some retranslation and listening for more specific detail.

In spite of these last reservations, this is a very appealing package: for the teacher since very little preparation is required before setting it up and for the student, who should find the materials interesting and useful.
SHEILA SMALLEY
Allerton High School, Leeds

Au Point. Michèle Deane, Bob Powell and Elaine Armstrong. *Bath University and Thomas Nelson.*

Student's book	*ISBN 0 17 449135 2*	*£12.99*
Teacher's resource book	*ISBN 0 17 449138 7*	*£30.00*
Cassette pack (3)	*ISBN 0 17 499139 5*	*£50.00*

+ VAT

Au Point, a new advanced course, published in June 1994, is the happy result of a fruitful collaboration beween Bath University and Nelson's. 'Happy' and 'fruitful' deservedly so, because these new materials seem to me to be almost everything an A level teacher could possibly want. The student's book is colourful, well-set out and lively, the Teacher's file, containing the tapescripts and answers, is full of suggestions for extension activities, the cassettes (two for use in class and one for self-study) are of an excellent standard, extremely clear and without irritating background noises.

The course consists of fifteen units and deals with the customary A level topics: relationships, money, health, the Third World, religion, the media and so on. Units 1–6 are designed to facilitate the transition from GCSE to A level. They cover, therefore, grammar which should be reasonably familiar to the new Sixth Former but which will need practice and reinforcing after the long summer break: revision of present, past, and future tenses, the imperative, relative pronouns, the use of the infinitive and many more. From chapter 7 the student is gradually moved on towards more examination-style work. There is good advice on developing study skills, planning essays, preparing an oral exposé and how to set up a debate. There are suggestions for using IT and topics for coursework.

I particularly liked the two very solid sections of reading materials designed for individual study. They contain a vast array of poetry, short news items and longer literary passages, advertising material, cartoons, etc.

Most explanations are given in French and the course encourages maximum use of the target language by both student and teacher. The self-study cassette may be copied and the transcript for this is photocopiable. There is a grammar section and glossary at the end of the student's book and suggestions for end-of-unit tests.

At first sight this course seems expensive but it contains so many good materials and ideas that the initial outlay would be justified. Highly recommended.
SHEILA SMALLEY
Allerton High School, Leeds.

Champs-Elysées, *La France en cassettes, a monthly news review in French, published by Champs-Elysées UK Ltd. ISSN 0886-005X. Subscription rates in the UK 5 monthly editions for £55 and with study supplements £70. Details from Champs-Elysées, Dept FPI (LON 295), London SW11 1YY, telephone 0171 738 9324.*

Champs-Elysées is a monthly publication which has been appearing in the United States for the last 10 years and has just recently become available in the UK. Its aim is to 'maintain language fluency by way of an entertaining audio-magazine which keeps the reader informed on cultural, social, political and current affairs.' This is not a collection of recordings from radio but specially commissioned reports which are presented in radio style on cassette, each monthly cassette lasting approximately one hour. Each cassette comes accompanied by a well presented transcription of all the audio texts. But there are more than transcriptions here. Vocabulary notes ranging from the simple but helpful kind – **porté disparu** reported missing – to extensive notes showing parallels and similar usages of the same word and on to extensive cultural notes e.g. '**Combrary** title of the first chapter of *A la recherche du temps perdu . . .*'

In addition to the transcriptions and notes which take up 40 A5 size pages there is also a substantial Study Supplement, containing optional but immensely useful pre-listening and listening exercises. Not every feature is covered but those which are are very thoroughly covered. Answers to the exercises are supplied on the back page.

But what of the listening material itself? In a word – excellent. Very polished and professional, presented in typical radio style, the texts arouse immediate interest both by their presentation and by the choice of subjects. Authenticity is the key word for although the articles are specially commissioned by the publishers there appears to be no writing down to suit foreign learners. The publishers claim that such authentic material could be set for 'intermediate and even beginning students'. I don't doubt it could, nor do I doubt that some pupils would benefit from such contact. The songs in particular often contain simple language and are very much in the modern idiom. To my mind, however, this is ideal post GCSE, Sixth Form and HE level work.

There is easily one month's work in one issue – possibly more. A resourceful teacher will find many ways of exploiting the material. Class study, group study, independent learning in a language lab or home cassette. This material is made to suit all these methods. One subscription of £70 would provide substantial work for a school year. What has to be born in mind is that some of the material, though certainly not all, is by its nature ephemeral. A surprising amount, however, as far as can be told from the review copy, will run and run.

Above all I feel I should stress the professionalism of the tapes I have listened to.

They are typical French radio recalling France Inter, perhaps even Radio Monte Carlo style. Jingles, voice over music for headlines. It's all there. A very clear introduction prepares the listener for what is to come. There is a variety of voices and news items are interspersed with genuine pop songs (for which the complete transcription is provided).

The only concession to foreign learners is perhaps in speed of delivery. Most commentators speak rather more slowly than your average French newsreader – but not much! The choice of language is totally authentic. The speakers all have professional radio voices with immaculate enunciation. The recordings are very high standard. Briefly this new series in the UK is a very good buy which will provide the teacher with hours of ready-made material for which much of the preparation has already been done. Listen to the cassette on your way to work and turn to the preparatory exercises as you enter the classroom and pupils/students should enjoy it. They will certainly get a feeling of progress as their compehension of each item increases and their general cultural awareness cannot help but be enhanced if they have opportunity to benefit from the supporting study notes. Strongly recommended. Incidentally there are parallel publications for polyglots – *Schau ins Land, Puerta del Sol, Acquarello Italiano.*

ALAN SMALLEY,
Leeds Metropolitan University

Etoiles 2. *Assessment Pack. Longman. 0 582 21667 2A. £19.50.*

The *Etoiles 2* Assessment Pack sets out to assist teachers with both continuous assessment and periodic testing 'while you teach, in the style you teach'.

The pack offers advice on both assessment opportunities and recording attainment. It also gives ideas for involving pupils in their progress, by sharing with them what the next stage is and what is required to reach it. I like the range of 'Bulletins' which are issued as rewards for achievement in class and also for progress over a given period of time. There are also suggested progress sheets designed for pupils to fill in themselves.

There are a multitude of suggestions for assessment opportunities from the *Etoiles 2* course components – student's book, cassette tapes and copymaster worksheets. The 'interros', whole class tests, which follow every two or three units of *Etoiles 2* complete the pack. The languages department is recommended to earmark tasks from the teacher's file to use for the tests and proceeds to list a wide range of opportunities from which to choose.

Notwithstanding the changes brought about by the Dearing Report, the Assessment Pack remains a very valuable source of help and support to teachers who are using the *Etoiles* course.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

FRANCO • BRITISH COUNCIL

ADVANCE NOTICE

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PRIZE £5000

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS

Introduction

Created over twenty years ago on the initiative of President Georges Pompidou and Prime Minister Edward Heath, the Franco-British Council exists to promote better understanding between Britain and France through a programme of meetings and reports with contributions from leading representatives of the worlds of culture, science, the arts, education, politics and business.

In September this year, assisted by generous funding from the Energy and Technical Services Group plc and General Utilities plc, we will be launching a prize to be awarded annually for three years to a state or private secondary school in Britain for a school partnership project.

The prize of £5000 will be awarded to a school for children between 11 and 16 years of age to carry out an environmental project with a partner school in France. This could relate to pollution, waste disposal, recycling, local conservation or any other environmental subject. The emphasis should be on practical work on a local level comparing the experiences of the two countries.

Criteria for Selection of Project

Schools should note that, in order to be eligible for this support, they should demonstrate the following:

- a clear definition of the project objectives achievable within a one year timescale and a limited number of pratical outcomes demonstrating the curriculum gains sought from the project
- a commitment to producing a comprehensive project report following the exchange together with a summary of how the money was spent
- that, in the absense of the award, they would find it difficult to fund the project from their own resources

Funding Support

The available funding of £5000 to support an envioronmental project will be able to be used for the following:

- the costs of pupil/teacher travel
- essential materials costs
- administrative backup
- release of staff time to undertake the development
- costs of necessary travel by staff to set up the project and monitor its progress

Funds allocated may not be used for the purchase of capital equipment

Timescale

The sponsored school should complete and report on their work within a one year timescale based on the academic year September 1996 to July 1997.

Evaluation and Reporting

Evaluation of the initiative and the production of a final report are conditions of sponsorship. The Franco-British Council retains the right to publish in full or summary form reports on the project sponsored, and the copyright of material produced with the funds remains with the Council.

Procedure for application

Schools are invited to contact the Franco-British Council for an application form from September 1995.

Applications should be submitted to the Franco-British Council no later than 20 February 1996. It is anticipated that a prize will be awarded in May 1996.

FRANCO-BRITISH COUNCIL - **158 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TR**
Tel: 0171 730 2601 Fax: 0171 730 2602

Notes for contributors

Contributions

The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French.

Articles written in French are particularly welcome

Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

a) Articles of about 3000 words.
b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (longer reviews or articles may be accepted),

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation

Articles should be submitted either typewritten or on computer disk (plus hard copy)

a) Typewritten: Type with double spacing. Typewriters or word processors should be set at 44 characters (the equivalent of the line length), as this will help the Editor plan the arrangement of the journal. Please send two copies of the article and keep one for yourself. One copy of the article should be 'clean' (with no corrections) to enable the printer to scan it. If there are any changes or corrections these should be made on the second copy.
b) Disk: Send 3½" or 5¼" disks (NB not Amstrad Cf2 disks) in double, single or high density formats. Most word processing packages are acceptable but if you have any query contact the ALL office. Also send in one hard copy of the article with the disk, and keep one for yourself.

Give your article one short title (not a title and a subtitle), and divide it up with brief subheadings.

Give full references for all sources quoted. Journal policy is to put these at the end of the article and not at the bottom of the page.

Illustrations

Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing

In order to be considered for including in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by 1st February and 1st August. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

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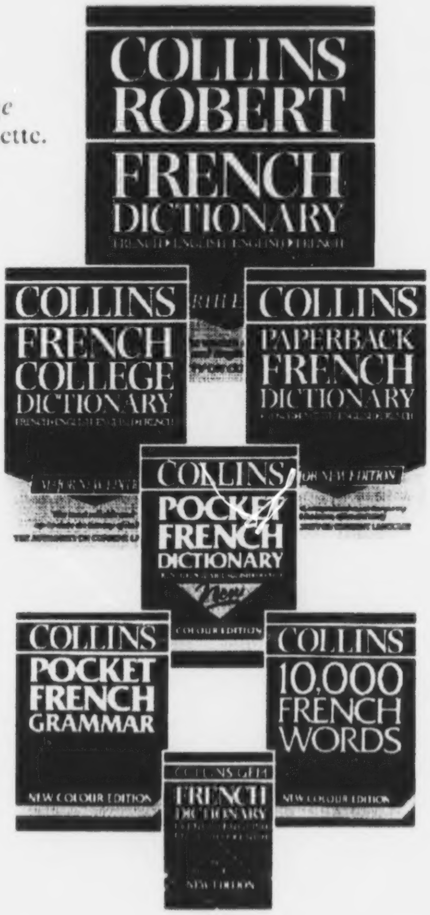

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The French Journal of the Association for Language Learning

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3 articles to mark the Pagnol Centenary

Across the Boards at A Level in French

Une Femme Professeur on Une Prof?

DECEMBER 1995
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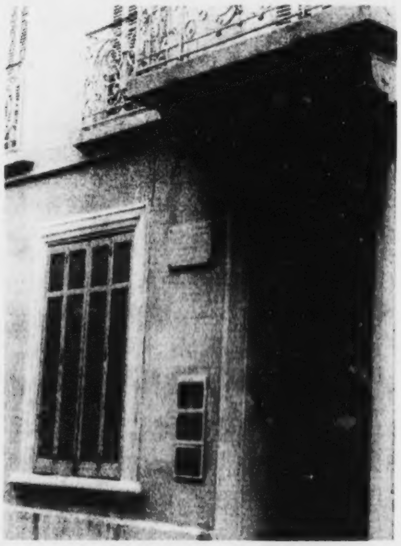
Editorial

Raymond Castans
MARCEL
PAGNOL

The latest biography of Pagnol has recently appeared in Livres de Poche.



16 Cours Barthélemy, Aubagne
Dans cette maison le 28 février 1895 est né MARCEL PAGNOL de l'Académie Française. Mort à Paris le 18 avril 1974.

Issue No. 12 of *Francophonie* aims to associate itself with the many other organisations and publications which in this year of 1995 have in their various ways commemorated the centenary of the birth of Marcel Pagnol (1895–1974). There is little doubt that no other French writer this century has become so well known in British schools and indeed throughout the English speaking world. His work for the cinema and more particularly his *Souvenirs d'Enfance* have made thousands of British A level candidates familiar with his easy, very readable style and often wry humour. Readers wishing to know more of the Pagnol background will find the recent biography by Raymond Castans (now in *Livres de Poche*) an important starting point, bringing to life again some of the episodes so familiar from *Souvenirs d'Enfance*.

Those who visit Aubagne to 'do' the Pagnol country following the *Circuit Marcel Pagnol* will find *Le Petit Monde de Marcel Pagnol*, the Pagnol Exhibition Centre in the heart of Aubagne, an excellent starting point and the publication by the Syndicat d'Initiative, *Dans les Pas de Marcel Pagnol*, constitutes an excellent guide (available from the SI Office de Tourisme, 13400 AUBAGNE, at 50 FF plus postage). Teachers preparing any Pagnol work will find this well illustrated guide a very useful support.

The visitor to Aubagne and the surrounding countryside can hardly fail to be constantly reminded of the impact made by the region on Pagnol. Everywhere there are reminders of Pagnol episodes, of *le Château de ma mère*, now fallen into ruins after being inhabited by squatters for 16 years, of the hills of *Manon des Sources*, of the *Vieux Port* in Marseille and the ferry boats which bear the names of Pagnol characters – *Marius*, *Fanny*, and *César* and La Treille where, in the little hillside cemetery lie the remains of Marcel Pagnol, his father Joseph, his mother Augustine, his daughter Estelle, and a few yards away, his childhood friend Lili killed in action, as Pagnol relates, in 1918.

The year 1995 is also significant since it marks the centenary of the birth of Jean Giono whose work made a major impact on Pagnol. In this issue *Francophonie* recalls the influence of Provence, its language and its people on Giono and Pagnol and stresses the debt owed by Pagnol to Giono for having provided more than inspiration for many of his cinema successes of the nineteen thirties – *La Femme du Boulanger* and *Regain* to name but two.

Readers intending to visit Provence on a literary pilgrimage will find that there are ample guide books to support a private visit. Such visitors should be aware that the hills above Aubagne are closed to tourists during the months of July and August to avoid increasing the fire risk. The Guide Michelin warns of this. Readers should also note that ALL has for several years organised a Pagnol Tour in early June and the success of this suggests such tours are likely to continue in the future.

Would you like to walk in the footsteps of Manon des Sources?

Smell the rosemary and thyme?

and experience modern-day provence?

ALL would be happy to enable you to enjoy these sensations, whilst refreshing your linguistic skills and sharpening your understanding of what is happening in contemporary France.

The Association plans to operate once again its highly successful *Pagnol's Provence* course at the end of May 1996. Organised in collaboration with Campus International at the university of Toulon the course offers something for everyone, from teachers specialising in Pagnol as an A-level option to primary school teachers with a grounding in French who would like to upgrade their fluency. The course is conducted throughout in French and participants are boarded with local families in order to provide almost total immersion.

Places are limited, so if you are interested please write **immediately** to ALL (150 Railway Terrace, Rugby CV21 3HN). Priority will be given to secondary teachers with A-level classes and to primary teachers currently offering, or planning to offer, French to one or more classes in their school. Other applications will be treated on their merits. More information about the course was given in the September 1995 edition of Language World newsletter.

Mistral, Giono and Pagnol as exponents of Provence

Marion Giles Jones Unversity of Wales,
Bangor

Introduction

1995 marks the centenary of the birth of Jean Giono and Marcel Pagnol. There is some logic, therefore, to coupling them together in an article, quite apart from the fact that their work especially in the 1930s, was intertwined. Pagnol made several films based on the work of Giono.

What may be less clear is the inclusion of Frédéric Mistral with the other two.

The purpose of the article is to discuss the particular contribution of these authors to widening knowledge and raising awareness of Provence in the reading public. They did this in very different ways, and with very different 'philosophies' and perceptions. Indeed, the Provence which connects them is a fairly tenuous concept. It is much easier and more accurate to talk of three different Provences.

Apart from providing some biographical and bibliographical information about the three authors, an attempt will be made to analyse, on the one hand, the particular contribution of each to raising awareness of Provence (even extolling it), and, on the other, to indicate where their work differs.

It is necessary, in such an analysis to consider the motivation of these authors, their feelings about Provence and their reasons for writing not only **what** they did, but **as** they did.

The immediate perceived difference between the earlier author, Mistral, and the two later ones lies in the language in which he expressed himself. Debates have raged for decades, and still do, in countries and regions like Wales, Catalonia, Friesland and others about the connection between identity and language. Can one say that Dylan Thomas was not Welsh because he wrote in English, that Pagnol was not a Provençal because he wrote in French, and that, of our three authors, only Mistral can claim to be the true exponent of Provence because he wrote in Provençal?

The writing medium is a particularly interesting feature of the discussion concerning the three authors from Provence. I hope to demonstrate that, whether the writing was in Provençal or French, comparisons can be made and influences noted. It may well be that language is the key to understanding why these three authors are being considered together.

Five elements will be discussed. A section on the life and work of Mistral, writing in Provençal, is followed by a section on some of the specific characteristics of the Provençal language. This section should serve as a bridge between Mistral and his later compatriots, since much of the argument, especially involving Giono, centres on the extent to which his language is influenced by Provençal. In lesser measure this is also true of Pagnol.

In the next two sections I shall discuss Giono and Pagnol, and the final section will seek to make some comparisons between all three authors.

An article of this length does not, regrettably, allow an in-depth analysis of **any** aspect of the work of the three authors. It is hoped, however, that it may provide sufficient insights to the reader to enable him/her to explore issues in greater depth on a personal level.

Frédéric (Frederi) Mistral

Mistral was born in 1830 near Maillane, seven kilometres north of St. Rémy, to a family of well-off peasant landowners. His father was then about 56 years old, and died when Mistral was 25. His death necessitated a move from the paternal home, which was inherited by his older half-brother. Frederi had been a brilliant school pupil at the Collège Royal, Avignon, and pursued studies in Law at the University of Aix-en-Provence.

As a result of enthusiasm fuelled by one of his Collège teachers, Joseph Roumanille, he found Provence and Provençal rather more absorbing and interesting than the Law, and never practised as a lawyer. He was sufficiently wealthy to be able to devote his life to writing.

Between 1855, the date of his father's death, and 1876, the date of his marriage, he lived with his mother on the outskirts of Maillane in the House of the Lizard (L'Oustau dóu Lesert), and when he did eventually marry had a house built over the road to his mother's.

His considerable contribution to enhancing the status of Provençal and preserving the traditions and social **mores** of Provence took four main forms – his poetry, the Félibrige, his dictionary and the Museon Arlaten at Arles.

He died on 25 March 1914 at the age of 83, from a chill which swiftly turned to bronchitis. He had believed strongly in the heredity of place and felt the people of Provence needed their language to protect their heritage. The words on his tomb bear witness to the link he made between God and country: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo et Provinciae nostrae da gloriam.*

(a) The poetry

It must be remembered that Mistral was a contemporary of the great Romantic French poets, Hugo and Lamartine – the latter was a particular admirer of Mistral and greatly advanced his acceptance by Parisian literary society. Epics were fashionable at that time and much of Mistral's poetry took the form of long epics – **Calendau** (1867), **Lis Isclo d'Or** (1875), **Nerto** (1884), **La Rèino Jano** (1890), **Lou Pouèmo dóu Rose** (1897), **Moun Espelido** (1906) – a unique insight into Mistral's intimate life and feelings – and **Lis Oulivado** (1912). Mistral enjoyed a long and productive literary life, but there is no doubt that the poem which is associated most readily with him is the one that made him famous. His first masterpiece was published when he was 29 years old, in 1859, although it had been seven years in the making. **Mirèio** (Mireille), a tragic love story, ending in the death of the young heroine at the church of Les Saintes Maries de la Mer, was made into an opera by Gounod as early as 1863. The long poem was dedicated to Mistral's mentor, Lamartine.

Te counsacre Mirèio: es moun cor e
moun amo,
Es la fleur de mis an!
Es un rasin de Gau qu'emé touto sa ramo
Te porge un païsan

(Je te consacre Mireille; c'est mon cœur et mon âme; c'est la fleur de mes années; c'est un raisin de Crau qu'avec toutes ses feuilles t'offre un paysan)

(Œuvres de Frédéric Mistral. Mireille.
`Paris. Libriarie Alphonse Lemerre)

The poem has great emotional appeal, although some have criticised it as folklore, because it evokes a great love of Provence and country life. All the themes of Provençal life, history and legend are interwoven – olive cultivation, harvesting, silk-weaving, costume, superstition, the Camargue, the guardians. The landscape is described in detail.

Calendau records festivals, dancing, jousting, the life of fishermen along the Mediterranean in a wealth of imagery and descriptive detail. All the customs evoked were under threat from industrialisation.

Mistrals language is rich, precise in technical terms, and relatively simple. He did not overdo diminutives. In terms of syntax, he tended to avoid turns of phrase which were too much like French. His comparisons, almost all from the rural world, show particular mastery. One example describes Lagalante in **Mirèio** (Canto 1) as being 'sad as a pollarded ash-tree '.

Although all the epic poems of Mistral have their individual themes, it would be true to say that the central unifying theme of all his work is Provence itself.

All his poems may not have touched the feelings of the people – some were historical melodramas – but his achievement was in raising a persecuted decadent language from a scorned patois to a poetic language of great beauty.

(b) The Félibrige

Seven kilometres from Avignon lies the château of Font Ségugne. Here, in 1854, seven poets from Avignon and the surrounding area met and formed what is known as the Félibrige, an intellectual movement whose specific aims were to defend and protect the Provençal language and to unify its many dialects by trying to arrive at a common standard of grammar and spelling acceptable to all, as well as to preserve the traditional life of Provence and to show that the ancient Roman Provincia had a distinct individuality of its own. The rather strange name of Félibrige, which is not much more meaningful in Provençal than it is in French or English, is reputed to have originated as follows: Mistral found a reference in an ancient Provençal poem to the young Jesus in the temple **emé li sèt felibre de la Lèi** (with the seven doctors of law). The number seven had great significance for Mistral. Members of the Félibrige began to produce a publication in Provençal called the Armana Prouvençau, still appearing today, and to promote publishing in the Provençal language. The Armana (Almanac) published 500 copies for its first edition in 1855. By 1900, 10,000 copies a year were being produced.

(c) The dictionary

One of Mistral's most remarkable achievements is a substantial dictionary in two volumes, entitled **Lou Tresor dóu Felibrige**. He began the task in 1862, and eventually accumulated 14,000 manuscript pages which were published between 1878 and 1886. He made great efforts to record words and structures in their varied forms, not only in Provence itself, but throughout Occitania*. J. Auroze (quoted in Aldington, p. 141) said: 'All the dialects of the *langue d'oc* are represented; every word is noted in all its meanings . . . He shows (the word) still living in the proverbs or sayings gathered from the people.' But it is much more than a dictionary. It contains an encyclopaedic knowledge of Provençal history, legends, traditions, customs, trades, occupations, equipment, clothing, furniture, and much more.

(d) The Museum

A lasting tribute to the traditions of Provence is the Museon Arlaten at Arles. Mistral was able to set up this Museum of Provençal life with his Nobel Prize money (won in 1913), but also received spontaneous gifts from all over Provence. The reconstructed scenes of Provençal life are based on episodes from Mistral's youth and included because they reflected ancient customs.

A note on Mistral's language

Before moving on to Giono, it is necessary, in order to appreciate Giono's French and some of its more unusual characteristics, to consider how it was that Mistral was able to be read and appreciated as a poet outside the confines of his own area. It is argued by some (like Giono) that the diverse dialects of a language like Provençal militate against anyone understanding Mistral's work fully if he does not come from within a few miles' radius of Avignon. (Lamartine, however, a native of southern Burgundy, who reportedly spoke **franco-provençal** until he was twelve years old, read Mistral in the original Provençal). It is also claimed that Mistral's efforts to standardise Provençal and the evident polishing and repolishing that went into his works made his language too remote and intellectual for his fellow-countrymen.

In order, therefore, for Mistral's work to be read by a wider audience, it needed to be translated into French.

The enterprise of providing a translation from Provençal into another Romance language is much more difficult than is

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*Blanchet (1992: 43) seriously disputes the historical existence of Occitania, and claims that the diverse *langues d'oc* (plural) would need to be mutually comprehensible to merit being commonly known as 'occitan'. On p. 21 he declares that 'le mouvement occitaniste veut imposer (le nom **occitan**) au provençal', imagined. Mistral undertook his own translations and frequently found that he had to interpret and paraphrase, resulting in something rather more drab and prosaic than the original. It may even be true to say that he deliberately embraced a certain gaucheness in order to show the superiority of Provençal! There were times when he failed to produce a viable translation and resorted to putting words in italics. This usually indicated a **provençalisme** (Frenchifying a Provençal word) or incorrect French syntax. Frequent explanatory notes accompany these words. Here are a few examples from **Mirèio**:

> tu pourrais manger des regardelles (eat only with your eyes, i.e. imaginary food)
>
> collines Baussenques (of Les Baux)
>
> deux cabridelles en fleur (bog plant of the South)
>
> dans les garrigues (heathland)
>
> une herbe que nous nommons l'herbette aux boucles (plant found in the Rhône near Tarascon and Arles)
>
> laisse humecter ta bouche . . . avec un peu d'agriotat (type of cherry liqueur)

It may be argued, of course, that such words would pose a problem only to a non-Southern French or a foreign reader. Incorrectness and **provençalismes** also characterise Giono and Pagnol's prose, but frequently without the italics, as we shall see later.

The characteristics of Provençal

We need now to consider, albeit much too briefly, some of the main characteristics of Provençal, compared with French. The French language of today was codified by Malherbe and Vaugelas in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The process involved stripping it of characteristics which remain in Provençal.

In general terms, Provençal, which has four main dialects – Rhodanian, Marseillais, Alpes or Haute Provence and Niçois – is less rigid and less codified than French, resulting in more stylistic freedom. Even in its written state, it is a more 'spoken' language, and has some affinity with more colloquial forms of French and with the way French was some four centuries ago. Where one could say that a French phrase or structure is incorrect, the equivalent in Provençal is correct. Examples from Giono would include: using an adverb in the function of a preposition (dedans les herbages); using **un** (instead of quelqu'un) followed by a relative clause (un qui est à l'article de la mort); making an agreement with the past participle of faire (je l'ai **faite** taire); using avoir as an auxiliary where French would use être (j'ai resté deux ans). Some genders are different. Above all, Provençal is a very affective language, capable of expressing many shades of feeling, sometimes in one word.

Provençal has a very rich vocabulary, especially concrete vocabulary, which frequently evokes a peculiarly Provençal reality, and which often has no equivalent in French, e.g. ubac (lieu exposé au nord); crau (lande couverte de cailloux); clapas (gros tas de pierres ramassées dans les champs). Some words are made to look more French by authors like Giono and Pagnol. Examples are:

taiolo	ceinture de laine . . . dont on serre la taille (Tresor dòu Felibrige) (TF) taillole (Giono)
garrigo	lande où il ne croît que des chênes-nains (Mistral) garrigue (this word is now commonly used for the particular geographical feature it depicts)
genouveso	battellement, rangées de tuiles qui supportent l'avant-toit d'une maison(TF) gênoise (Giono)
paiero	meule de paille (TF) paillère (Giono)

Succinctness is a distinct Provençal characteristic. French frequently needs a whole phrase to express one Provençal word. The succinctness comes from the use of prefixes, suffixes, diminutives, augmentatives, compound words and collective nouns.

Concerning suffixes, for example, one could use several different suffixes rather than just one, for the same word. It is a temptation for Southern writers to borrow suffixes characteristic of Provençal and attach them to French stems, in order to increase the 'southernness' of their prose. Some are also reminiscent of more archaic French. Thus,

mensonge	becomes	menterie
mal		mauvaiseté
souvenir		souvenance
usage		usance
les étables		étableries
méchanceté		méchantise

Collective nouns are particularly 'Provençal':

la pastriho	les pâtres
l' aubriho	les arbres
l'auceliho	les oiseaux

Succinctness enables one to evoke a precise association, and its translation necessitates a wordy phrase:

descourrejouna	enlever des lacets de **cuir**
e signavo soun front	et portait la main au front pour faire le signe de la croix
descoucounon	détachent des rameaux les cocons des vers à soie
desbouscarle	je dépeuple de fauvettes

Vocabulary is often very evocative and metaphoric. Its lack of rigidity, unlike present-day French, allows some invention to take place.

Syntax, equally, is lacking in rigidity, and much resembles popular French. There is an absence of formal logic, resulting in a very expressive quality which frequently reflects spontaneous thought. Its flexibility has been compared to that of ancient Greek.

Some of the characteristics of Provençal are seen in the French of both Giono and Pagnol. Their attitude to Provençal and their admission of its place in their work is a contentious and fascinating issue, which can only be touched upon briefly here.

Jean Giono*

Giono's Provence is not as lush as that of Mistral.

Apart from service in the First World War, infrequent trips to Paris and holidays in Majorca, Giono lived all his life in Manosque where he was born in 1895, the only child of a 50-year-old father of Piedmontese origin, a shoe-maker.

His humble origins and his father's age made Giono decide to leave school in 1911. He worked in a bank until 1929, when literary success in the shape of his novel **Colline** (swiftly followed by **Un de Baumugnes** and **Regain**) enabled him to live for the rest of his life from his pen. He died in 1970.

Most readers place Giono's writings in two distinct periods, roughly corresponding to pre- and post-World War 2. However, all his work has a basis in Provence, and all his work tells a story. A great admirer of the classical authors (Homer, Virgil and others) Giono kept up the classical (and Provençal) tradition of story-telling. Whereas he himself minimised the difference between his pre-war and post-war works, to the reader the main difference lies in the style. The early works (as above, plus **Le Chant du Monde**, **Jean le Bleu**, **Que Ma Joie Demeure** among others produced in the 1930s) are also contemporary, whereas, later, he embraced a more historical perspective, as in **Le Hussard sur le Toit** (1951), **Le Moulin de Pologne** (1952), **Angélo** (1958), **Deux cavaliers de L'Orage** (1965).

The early novels and one or two more polemical works during the 1930s express a dissatisfaction with modern civilisation and idealise life on the land. Industrialisation is despiritualising. Man is cut off from the true riches of life – one of his works is entitled **Les Vraies Richesses** – and suffers from the destruction of community life, brought about by modern living. In his idealisation of life on the land, and his extolling of self-sufficiency, he expresses a nostalgia for a pre-mechanised age and ignores the harsh realities of peasant existence. His main characters are elemental beings, larger than life and capable, almost, of miracles.

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*The section on Giono is based very largely on an unpublished doctoral thesis (Giles-Jones 1976). This contains references which would be too numerous and cumbersome to list individually here, especially in respect of precise references to vocabulary and other linguistic matters, and the opinions of critics.

Provence is more than a mere backcloth to these tales, and although Giono might have expressed similar philosophies and views of life had he situated his characters elsewhere, the language in which he expresses himself firmly situates him in Provence.

In considering Giono as an exponent of Provence, one needs to consider three elements in particular:

- his attitude to Provence
- his attitude to Provençal
- what his critics say.

The early novels, of which **Regain** is probably the most well-known, seem, at first glance, to be firmly entrenched in the land of Upper Provence. The landscape is remote, austere and cruel, and, to some extent, so are the people. The language is peppered with **provençalismes**. What comes over very well is the comparison which can be made with the landscapes of Homer and Virgil. What might be termed 'the civilisation of the olive' is very evident in Giono and forms a link with all southern European lands.

Some of Giono's early critics equated his early work with regionalism. He became very irritated with the title 'regionalist writer' (for him, a pejorative term) because he saw his Provence as a microcosm of a greater reality, reflecting the universal truths of love, hatred, jealousy, hardship, meanness and so on. Unfortunately, although the irritation is understandable, it grew to the point where Giono actively and quite ferociously reacted against Provence and, especially, Provençal. There is no folklore in his work, and he had strong feelings about the view others have of Provençal people which is projected by red cummerbunds, drums and fifes. He was prone to snide remarks which were frequently contradictory. 'La Provence n'a rien influencé en moi' is one such patently exaggerated remark. He goes on: 'J'aurais écrit ce que j'ai écrit si je l'avais écrit en Ecosse ou au Groënland'. (Personal letter of 31 March 1966, quoted in Giles-Jones 1976: 1) This may be so for **what** he wrote. It is hard to accept as far as **how** he wrote goes.

He had no sympathy for the Félibres and considered Mistral to be an 'escroc de génie'! (Giles-Jones 1976: 24). Provençal, for him, was a eunuch in make-up (eunuque fardé) (Preface to 1932 edition of Colline.) He was very dismissive of Mistral's efforts and loved to emphasise the difference in the dialects (to the point of incomprehension, in his opinion, between one valley and another). He was equally dismissive about the **provençalismes** of Pagnol's characters. He claimed that Pagnol projected a false image of his region, and had little patience, in particular, with Pagnol's **qué! té! oou! peuchère!** of the early plays.

His prose is not an 'easy read'. Pagnol touches the heart more frequendy than Giono and is much more humorous. And yet, some of Giono's themes and elements of his vocabulary and structures effectively prevent us from making his work as French (or, at least, as non-Provençal) as he would have wished. A subconcious element is at work, especially in respect of the syntax, and the rhythms of Giono's prose are very similar to Provençal in their flexibility, resonance and phraseology.

It would be true to say that some of Giono's critics added fuel to his irritation. Some assumed he was a peasant. Some compared him with Daudet. That is, he was a Provençal storyteller. Some considered he was a true Occitan writer but not one writing in Occitan. Some think this is because it was too difficult for him. Some compared his 'tone' to that of Mistral. Some claimed he never wrote a word of Provençal in his work. One critic, Jean Grenier (Nouvelle Revue Française, December 1 1932) felt that French, a bare language (**nue et dépouillée**) was unsuited to Giono's temperament, and that he tried to write Provençal in French or, at least, translate a Provençal way of thinking into French.

Too many critics, especially Northern ones, attributed too much inventiveness to him. This might have fuelled his own claims to having produced scores of neologisms. Many found his language obscure, and much debate arose about the 'authenticity' of the dialogues of the early works. The language irritated many. On the other hand, one critic from Provence claimed that he had succeeded better than the Félibres in reviving the language of Provence.

His language is rather poetic. Some of the so-called neologisms are based on Provençal words. There is certainly a subconscious Provençal feel about the syntax, and the flexibility of the Provençal phrase is echoed in the rhythms of Giono's prose. Like Mistral, he employs metaphors from the natural world of Provence.

It would be all too easy to fill pages with examples of Giono's use of words based on Provençal. He sometimes claims that his choice of vocabulary is in imitation of the sixteenth-century writers he admired. It is hard to accept this as fact, knowing that the Provençal original is virtually indistinguishable.

The following are a few examples of words characteristic of Provençal usage, but used by Giono, normally without italics or explanation, as evoking a peculiarly Provençal reality, or an image such as one would see in Provençal usage.

Prefixes give: abouché – stuck to the mother's breast; achaudi – made warm; apaillé – straw thrown on animals; faire les assavoirs – inform someone of a death; décroire – stop believing; déparler – lose one's reason; se recamper – to return home; emmanteler – to cover with a coat.

Some examples of suffixes, which are evocative of the sixteenth century and regional French as well as Provençal itself are: viandailles – meat in general (not pejorative in Provençal); égratignade – scratch (égratignure in French); des galopades d'agneau and des agnelades de brume are wonderfully evocative metaphors.

Diminutives are almost non-existent in standard modern French. Provençal and Occitan have not only retained them, but continue to create them. They can express both smallness and affection, but the latter notion is often lost in a French translation. Some uses can be misleading, as in the case of **belette** (weasel in French). Giono explains its use in the context of a person (Eau Vive p. 245): 'Elle avait le surnom de "belette". Mais ici ça voulait dire aussi "petite belle".... Other examples are: abbéton (enfant de chœur); caprille (petite chèvre); soisette (petite soie), fenestrelle, fenestron (petite fenêtre). Damote (petite dame) is pejorative with a connotation of snobbishness.

The opposite phenomenon to diminutives, is peculiarly Provençal – augmentatives. They enable one to express, not only size, but often irritation, and are frequently pejorative. **Capounas** (rogue); **hermas** (uncultivated land); **bestiasse** (big animal or fool); **bouillasse** (large bog); **boyu** (literally, large intestines i.e someone with a big paunch). Provençal is very rich in compound words, which are, in essence, metaphors. Their use is easier for rural people than learned terms, and their flexibility allows creation to take place. Without studying the Provençal originals, it would be extremely difficult to guess what some of them mean, which is, in part, what makes Giono rather difficult to read. Here are some unusual examples in Provençal:

mau-de-la-terro	epilepsy
crebo-chin	moor-hen (she goes so fast, it's enough to kill a dog !)
iver-estièu	all year

Giono has the following, among many more examples:

bâiller-mourir	to breathe one's last
chien-mouton	poodle
contre-poche	inside pocket
guigne-queue	wagtail
poivre-d'âne	savory (Prov. pebre d'ase; Fr. sarriette)
rat d'arbre	dormouse
bleu-charrette	a colour (one needs to know that carts were painted blue in the area)
homme-musique	accordeon player

(Daudet has an example of homme-chiffre, a man who worked with numbers)

More general words used by Giono and based on Provençal are:

aiguadier	water-supervisor
argelas	thorny broom
assalier	salt-lick for animals

l'avé	wealth (in sheep and lambs)
avelaniers	hazel-trees
baile	head shepherd

The above represent but very few of the hundreds of words created from Provençal, and used by Giono in his works.

Marcel Pagnol

We see yet another Provence in the work of Pagnol, who, because of his film career and especially the two films based on his book L'Eau des Collines, is undoubtedly the best known of the three authors in Britain.

He was born, like Giono, one hundred years ago, but in Aubagne, outside Marseille. The great tragedy of Pagnol's young life was to lose his mother in 1911.

While Giono was gaining fame for his first three so-called 'peasant' novels, collectively known as **La Trilogie de Pan**, Pagnol was producing a different kind of trilogy: three plays/films set in Marseille, firstly **Marius** (1929), then **Fanny** (1931), and **César** (1936). Between 1933 and 1940 he produced a dozen or so films based either in Marseille or in the hills above Aubagne. Four of these films were based on the work of Giono: **Jofroi** (1934), **Angèle** (1934), **Regain** (1937) and **La Femme du Boulanger** (1938). However, much modification of the poetic tone of the originals was necessary.

The post-war period saw him producing a film in 1952 entitled **Manon des Sources**. It was only after making the film that he wrote the book from which, much later, the films **Jean de Florette** and **Manon des Sources** were created. In 1954 he produced a film version of four tales from Daudet's **Lettres de Mon Moulin**, but Provençal comic drama had lost its appeal by then.

The years 1959–60 produced his **Souvenirs d'Enfance**, better known to A-level candidates and film-goers as **La Gloire de Mon Père** and **Le Château** de **Ma Mère**. The other volumes are entitled **Le Temps des Secrets** and **Le Temps des Amours**, published posthumously in 1977, three years after Pagnol's death. A further posthumous book; of **Confidences** appeared in 1981.

His themes echo those of Giono – the selfishness of peasants, their narrowness and superstition, their conspiracies against outsiders and the evocation of a lost world of simplicity and innocence. Like Mistral, Giono and other writers from the South of France, Pagnol was a great story-teller. **L'Eau des Collines** is a tale of capricious fate, encompassing selfishness, inbreeding, deference to one's elders, the importance of family and property and mistrust of outsiders. These characteristics appear in Giono too, especially in **Colline**.

Whereas Mistral's Provence is centred around Avignon, St Rémy and the Rhône valley, and Giono's around Manosque, the valley of the Durance and the foothills of the Alps, Pagnol's Provence is centred in Marseille and its neighbourhood, especially Aubagne. The nostalgia evoked by Pagnol's works was a very popular antidote to modern life. Millions of copies of his works have been sold, and the recent films have won awards and broken box-office records.

He was, like the other two authors, very precise in his evocation of the flora and fauna of his region, as he was in sociological comment. His language is full of images and exaggeration. The spoken word is transposed on to the page, but the language is more conventionally 'provençalisant' than that of Giono. Pagnol's language is perhaps more reminiscent of Daudet and other southern writers whose wish was to evoke Provence for Parisian readers. Pagnol uses Provençal from time to time. He also frequently exploits the imperfect use of French of his characters, thereby creating humour. He records the mispronunciations of Southerners: **satistiques**, **essituteur**; malapropisms like **hypothèque** for **hypothèse**, and deformations like **entention** for **attention**.

Editions and commentaries of Pagnol's works contain limited glossaries of his **provençalismes**. Here are a few examples: cabridan – hornet; adessias – goodbye; pregadiou – praying mantis; escagasser – to crush; fada – simpleton; agasse – magpie; parpailloun – butterfly.

Many Provençal or semi-Provençal words used by Pagnol are the same as those used by Giono, although sometimes spelled differently, for example

gratte-cul – dog-rose
larmeuse – small grey lizard (lagremuse in Giono)
bouscarle - warbler
machote – owl
serpolet -a variety of thyme
lentisque – mastic-tree
agachon – hide
picosse – wood-axe

Some evoke a reality of his own area, like **mas** (a provençal farmhouse), a word which Giono almost never uses, since the same thing is called a **bastide** in his area.

The following words used by Pagnol are not found in Giono, possibly because they are too close to the original Provençal.

loube – saw (Prov. loubo = a she-wolf – the comparison is with her teeth)
messugue – stinking hellebore
migon- sheep-droppings
parpaléjer – to blink, twitch
pételin – turpentine tree
pourridié – rotting matter
cacagne – gripes
ensuquer – to stun
s'estransiner – to be overcome by emotion

There is little doubt that both authors have sought to give a sense of place to their writings by their use of local words.

Comparisons

As a concluding section to this study, we need to ask two main questions: what did these three authors have in common? and what does any common ground have to do with Provence?

It may not be irrelevant to suggest that, on a personal level, all three were greatly influenced by their fathers – elderly ones in the case of Mistral and Giono. These fathers were not only admired by their sons, but indulged them in what others might have dismissed as poetic fancies. The creativity of Giono, in particular, seems to have come directly from a man who could himself have been a poet rather than a cobbler if times and circumstances had permitted. Both Mistral's father and Giono's were readers of the Bible. Mistral's father is reputed to have read only three books in his life: the Bible, Don Quixotte and the Imitation of Christ.

Because of his relative poverty, Giono was unable to afford to buy books other than the Classiques Garnier. He imbued himself in the work of the Greek and Roman poets. Pagnol also loved Latin at school, and felt that Latin authors had said exactly what he wanted to say, but 2000 years earlier. Mistral's work, as well as Giono's, contains echoes of Virgil and Homer. Mistral described himself as a 'humble student of the great Homer' (**Mirèio** Canto 1), and one can see some parallels with Virgil's **Aeneid** (the 6th Canto of **Mirèio** and the 6th Canto of the **Aeneid**). Elsewhere one can detect some imitation of Ovid and Anacreon. Adolphe Dumas, a poet and collector of the traditional songs of Provence, the man who introduced Mistral to Lamartine, called Mistral 'the Virgil of Provence, the Mantuan shepherd arriving in Rome with poetry worthy of Gallus and Scipio' (for Rome, read Paris) (quoted in Edwards 1964: 54). What is not easy to determine is whether these influences were conscious or sub-conscious.

All three writers wished to recreate in their works the reality of Provence – of **their** Provence. They also wished to evoke an 'époque disparue'. Both Giono and Mistral were opposed to the onrush of mechanisation and consumerism. Machines make slaves of people. Mistral was concerned at the depopulation of the countryside, as was Giono fifty years later. Pagnol's **Eau des Collines** also evokes an age that is no more.

One way of recreating Provence is to make the landscape itself central to the writings. In all three authors, the **genius loci** is very strong, and ties up with Homeric and Virgilian landscapes. The beauty, cruelty and change of mood of the landscape of Provence is evoked by them all, and especially problems caused by lack of water. The power of place is evoked in very precise detail, often with very technical vocabulary.

Giono's use of Provence was centred mainly on the landscape (often rather vaguely), the language and knowledge of the people. Nature, for him, is alive and almost human. He enjoyed the unbroken link between twentieth century Provence and that of the old Roman Provincia. His women characters rinse their clothes in Roman sandstone sarcophagi.

Pagnol's sense of place is much more precise than that of Giono. Precise topographical details situate **L'Eau des Collines**, especially in a certain area, two leagues from Aubagne. Even if the place names are invented, the places are recognisable. This has led to guided tours of Pagnol country!

An author can evoke a place and a people very easily by judicious use of local names. This is especially the case where people's names are concerned. Some of Pagnol's names have a peculiarly Provençal 'feel', which evoke the Roman or Greek influence (César, Marius, Philoxène). Others, like Pique-Bouffigue, Cabridan, Pamphile, Graffignette are patently southern.

The matronymic, not unknown in other societies, and immortalised in the name Jean de Florette, is very Provençal. Again, in order to avoid confusion, clarification of a person's name was often provided by adding specific detail, e.g. Manon du Bossu (the daughter of the hunchback). [It is interesting to recall that Mistral's maid was called Marie du Poète].

The works of Mistral and Giono, and, to a lesser extent, Pagnol, contain an element of the epic. All are story-tellers on the grand scale. Their aim is to recreate an era which has gone. The role of fate is also important in the works. Man is frequently the plaything of the gods, as was evidenced in the great classical authors.

All three wrote something autobiographical, where their upbringing in Provence can be seen to have been a marking influence in addition to that of their fathers. Giono's semi-autobiographical **Jean le Bleu** came fairly early in his career (1932), whereas Mistral and Pagnol produced their **Mount Espelido (Mon Eclosion**, normally rather mundanely translated as **Mes Origines)** and **Souvenirs d'Enfance** at the ages of 76 and 64 respectively.

All three, in their different ways, had to try to solve the problem of language. They had to contend with the dichotomy between a genuine and an artificial language. Mistral s aim was to make a literary language out of a spoken one. He never forgot that his language had once been the great language of poetry and the Troubadours. His attempts to restore it to its literary glory were, for some critics, an error, since it became artificial in the making, and too difficult for many contemporaries. To read Mistral, you needed to be literate. Many Provençaux were unable to read his work.

Giono and Pagnol wanted to create literature from the linguistic 'reality' of Provence. The result in the case of all three (naturally for Mistral, more artificially for the others since they wrote in French) is very metaphorical. Many of the metaphors used are borrowed from the land and rustic things. All three used the richness of the Provençal language and had a great facility for dialogue, especially Pagnol. He, more so than the other two, was able to combine the pathetic and the humorous, so much so that the stereotypical Provençal of 60 or 70 years ago is forever associated with Pagnol. His work is more sentimental than that of the others. But Giono also has his moving scenes, especially at the end of **Un de Baumugnes**, as does Mistral in depicting Mireille's misery as caused in Canto 8 by her father's opposition to her choice of suitor.

Conclusion

A quotation from Giono's Introduction to the Guide Bleu book on **Provence** (1954) serves to remind us of the diversity of this fascinating land.

> Ne suis-je pas en train . . . de dire qu'Arles, Tarascon, ne sont pas toute la Provence ? Qu'elle a mille visages, mille aspects, mille caractères et que c'est en faire une fausse description que de la représenter une et indivisible. Les terres

du bord du Rhône ont une flore, une faune, une population sans aucun rapport avec celles des plateaux et des montagnes . . . La Provence est la terre des contrastes.

(Giono: Provence: 23–24)

A land which evokes fascination, enthusiasm, irritation, passion and love. In different measure, our three authors have engendered all these feelings in their readers, both for their region and their work.

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Marcel Pagnol et le cinéma

Gérard Poulet University of Exeter
and Eric Simon Conseiller Cinéma, Institut Français de Londres

L'œuvre cinématographique: Itinéraire

L'épopée aux portes de la légende . . .

Marcel Pagnol vient au monde en 1895 dans la ville d'Aubagne sous le Garlaban, couronné de chèvres, au temps des derniers chevriers. 1895, c'est aussi la naissance du cinématographe grâce aux travaux d'Edison et des frères Lumière; les films sont courts et ne «parlent» pas. Les premières œuvres de Pagnol seront des pièces de théâtre. *Les Marchands de Gloire* (1925) et *Jazz* (1926) ne connaîtront que quelques représentations, et des critiques mitigées. En 1929, Pagnol écrit *Marius*.

Marius, monté chez Léon Volterra au Théâtre des Variétés, malgré son «décor» local (les exploits d'un patron de bistrot marseillais et de son fils) remporte un immense succès. Pendant plus de huit cents représentations, Raimu, Pierre Fresnay (qui était alsacien), Charpin, Orane Demazis et bien d'autres vont faire chanter l'accent du vieux port de Marseille sur une scène parisienne. La force de *Marius* réside dans l'évocation joyeuse du peuple des pêcheurs, des poissonnières, des marins, des patrons de café . . . Ces gens s'aiment, se disputent, jouent aux boules. C'est une bouffée d'émotion qui s'échappe dans le grand vent de Marseille, qui, à l'époque, est aussi la porte du rêve et de l'évasion, toute grande ouverte sur l'Afrique, la Légion

Le Vieux Port, scène de Marius

étrangère et l'Extrême-Orient!

En 1929, la petite amie de Marcel Pagnol s'appelle Kitty Murphy. Elle est irlandaise et habite le quartier londonien de Golders Green. Le couple passe plusieurs weekends à Londres, (qui n'est qu'à deux heures de Paris avec Imperial Airways!) et, un samedi soir, il découvre au London Palladium un film parlant: *Broadway Melody* avec Bessie Love. Pagnol écrira dans *Cinématurgie de Paris*:

> *«La voix de Madame Bessie Love n'était pas déplaisante; mais quand elle sanglotait, on pensait à un petit chien aboyant dans un tonneau . . . J'étais convaincu; le cinéma parlant, après quelques perfectionnements techniques, allait être le nouveau moyen d'expression de l'art dramatique.»*[1]

Dans l'édition du *Journal* du 17 mai 1930, paraît un article signé Pagnol, intitulé *«Le Film parlant»*. Il commence par une déclaration péremptoire et qui se révelera vraie: *«Nous entrons dans l'ère des films parlants!»*[2] Puis l'auteur démontre les limites scéniques du théâtre mais aussi les frustrations de l'écrivain qui écrit son livre avec un stylo[3] et décrit les miracles de l'appareil de prises de vues:

> *«Tout spectateur verra l'image exactement comme l'objectif l'a vue, à la même distance et sous le même angle. Le microphone a la même vertu. Tout spectateur entendra les paroles de l'acteur comme les a entendues la fidèle boîte ronde lorsqu'elle les enregistra.. Nous ne sommes plus limités par les dimensions de la salle.. Nous allons avancer, comme il nous plaira, l'appareil de prise de vues.. Nous pourrons écrire une scène chuchotée et la faire entendre à trois mille personnes.. Enfin, dans une scène, nous pourrons choisir: nous ne ferons voir qu'une main avec un revolver, ou le sorbet qui glisse dans le cou de Charlie Chaplin.»*.

Et Pagnol de conclure par ces mots merveilleux:

> *«Nous ferons éclater tous les murs du théâtre, nous mettrons en morceaux le décor ou l'acteur. Pour la première fois, des auteurs dramatiques pourront réaliser des œuvres que ni Molière ni Shakespeare n'ont eu les moyens de tenter.»*[2]

Ce texte constitue la véritable déclaration cinématographique de Pagnol qui, dans la caméra, découvre un instrument qu'Orson Welles appelle «*le plus beau train électrique du monde*» ..Ce même Welles qui considérait Pagnol comme le génie du cinéma, l'égal de Chaplin et de John Ford.

Le langage filmé de Pagnol sera simple, aussi simple que son langage écrit, fait d'un sujet, d'un verbe et d'un complément. Au cinéma il utilisera principalement le plan américain, parfois le gros plan, mais surtout le plan d'ensemble et le travelling. (Caméra mobile). Comme les grands réalisateurs américains qu'il admire, il adore «les grandes gueules» et son grand plaisir, c'est de travailler avec Raimu, Fernandel, Rellys ou Charpin, des acteurs dont le visage crève l'écran d'émotion!

Pagnol aime écrire ou adapter lui-même ses histoires, les produire et les réaliser. C'est un auteur complet qui, comme Sacha Guitry ou Jean Renoir, saura séduire les jeunes loups de la Nouvelle Vague.

Rossellini, l'un des fondateurs du néoréalisme en Italie pendant la guerre, dira de Pagnol: *«C'est lui l'inventeur du néo-réalisme, bien avant nous, il tournait dehors, il créait des maisons pour ses films . . .»*. Comme John Ford qui inventa le western lyrique et réaliste en tournant ses films sur place à Monument Valley, Marcel Pagnol réalisera ses œuvres autour d'Aubagne, chez lui, à la Treille avec sa propre «*stock company*» composée d'acteurs et de techniciens amis qui, tous les midis, arrêtaient la caméra pour boire le pastis avec le patron. Enfin, auteur complet, il sera aussi propriétaire de studios et distributeur!

Les débuts de la production cinématographique

La production cinématographique de Pagnol commence en 1931, lorsque le patron de la Paramount en France, Bob Kane, décide de produire des œuvres, des sujets français pour le public hexagonal dans ses studios de Saint-Maurice. Pour tourner *Marius* on fait venir d'Hollywood un metteur en scène hongrois Alexandre Korda, futur brillant patron du cinéma anglais. Pagnol dira de lui: «*Ce tartare d'olive oil m'a tout appris*». Korda apprend à Pagnol à placer un micro, une caméra, à diriger Raimu et les autres, mais il sort déçu du tournage de *Marius* à cause des exigences de son producteur. Pagnol s'est battu pour lui imposer ses acteurs (Kane voulait Chevalier et Charles Boyer!); alors il décide pour la suite de devenir producteur! *Topaze* est réalisé en 1932 par Louis Gasnier avec Louis Jouvet, puis Fanny est tourné en partie à Marseille par Marc Allégret, mais Pagnol, qui supervise la réalisation, est l'auteur du célèbre travelling qui suit la montée de Fanny enceinte jusqu'à la cathédrale Notre-Dame de la Garde!

Marcel Pagnol, avide de réaliser, se jette à l'eau; il va faire ses gammes avec deux films, deux adaptations littéraires: *L'article 330* de Courteline et *Le Gendre de Monsieur Poirier* d'après Labiche; pour illustrer ses théories cinématographiques, il publie une revue *Les cahiers du Film*. Très vite, il s'attaque à des sujets typiquement provençaux avec une série de moyens métrages dont *Jofroi*.

Jofroi, adapté d'une nouvelle de Jean Giono (Jofroi de la Maussan), est tourné à la Treille avec le compositeur Vincent Scotto. Ce petit film de quarante minutes sera le film de complément du *Gendre de Monsieur Poirier*, mais c'est lui qui attirera les spectateurs ! Mélo paysan et provençal. Il s'agit de l'histoire de Jofroi qui vend à Fonce sa propriété en viager, mais quand celui-ci veut en abattre les arbres, Jofroi menace de se suicider. Après la mort de Jofroi, Fonce respectera ce voeu . . .

Cet essai scelle le début de la collaboration de Marcel Pagnol avec Jean Giono, l'écrivain populaire retiré dans sa ferme de Haute Provence, pays aride où souffle le vent. Giono aime ses paysages et les gens qui les habitent. Déjà il sait les villages abandonnés, l'exode rural, les luttes pour l'eau..

Les chefs-d'œuvre

Marcel devient un grand cinéaste le jour où il donne le premier tour de manivelle d'*Angèle*. *Angèle*, tirée, en 1934, du livre de Giono *Un de Baumugnes*, fait de Fernandel un grand acteur: il joue le rôle de Saturnin, un valet de ferme un peu simplet qui aime d'un amour impossible Angèle, la fille de ses maîtres qui s'est enfuie à la ville où elle est devenue prostituée. Saturnin ira jusqu'au meurtre pour la délivrer du voyou qui l'oblige à se prostituer . . . De retour au village, elle épousera un brave garçon . . . Film où même les cigales et le vent jouent, *Angèle* connaît un succès foudroyant de Paris à New York et impose non seulemnt le joli visage d'Orane Demazis mais aussi une certaine idée du cinéma régional où chacun est fier de jouer avec son «accent». Pagnol tournera en son direct et un village entier sera construit pour les besoins du tournage en décors naturels.

Cigalon suit en 1935. Il s'agit d'une fable filmée de soixante-dix minutes interprétée par des comédiens locaux: Arnaudy, Henry Poupon, Alida Rouffe, Blavette . . . Dans un tout petit village de Provence, Cigalon tient un restaurant, mais refuse de servir les clients. Une ancienne blanchisseuse Madame Toffin ouvre un restaurant en face du sien. L'orgueil de Cigalon se réveille.. Finalement Madame Toffin épousera Cigalon ! Le film fut mal reçu et un critique écrivit: *«La caméra de Pagnol se trouve dans le trou du souffleur, ce film c'est du théâtre filmé»*.

Merlusse (1935) est un court métrage tourné au Lycée Thiers à Marseille . . . Pagnol rappelle dans *Cinématurgie de Paris* qu'il en écrivit l'histoire sans ambition, seulement pour tester un nouvel appareil d'enregistrement du son. Le rôle magistral du pion fut confié à Henri Poupon. Merlusse terrorise les élèves par sa laideur; la nuit de Noël, il surveille le dortoir où s'entassent les élèves qui ne rentrent pas en famille. Comme il a très bon cœur, il joue le Père Noël . . .

Merlusse qui sera refait, en 1964, pour la télévision est un chef-d'œuvre..

Cinq ans après *Marius* et quatre ans après *Fanny*, Pagnol met en scène *César*, la dernière partie de sa trilogie marseillaise. César-Raimu symbolise Pagnol et son amour des gens simples.. César va voir mourir son vieux complice Panisse, maître voilier du vieux port, au terme d'une ultime confession, entouré de tous ses amis joueurs de manille. Marius rencontre son fils Césariot, reçu au concours de Polytechnique, et Fanny retrouve Marius. Film bouleversant, au dialogue époustouflant. Il suffit de se souvenir de ces quelques mots prononcés par Panisse peu avant de mourir:

«Ça me fait de la peine de savoir que je ne boirai plus le pastis avec vous, que je ne jouerai plus aux boules.. Je vais regretter le matin quand je me rasais devant la fenêtre en regardant le vieux port..»'

César est suivi, l'année suivante d'une autre adaptation de Giono *Regain* avec Fernandel, Marguerite Moréno, Orane Demazis, Le Vigan et toute la troupe de seconds rôles si chers à Pagnol. C'est l'histoire toute simple d'un village abandonné qui va renaître grâce au braconnier Panturle et à la présence d'une femme. Pagnol réussit ce film lyrique, tourné au-dessus d'Aubagne à grands coups de travelling qui mettent en valeur le paysage. On n'oubliera pas le plan final où les silhouettes d'un homme et d'une femme, semant du blé, se découpent sous le ciel de Provence.

Le Schpountz (1938) avec Fernandel est un film sur le cinéma, similaire par bien des côtés à *La Nuit Américaine* de Truffaut. Un schpounz, c'est un jeune naïf qui rêve de faire du cinéma. Fernandel qui travaille dans l'épicerie de son oncle (Charpin) est victime d'une farce montée par une équipe de comédiens venus tourner un film dans son village. Pourtant, à Paris, il deviendra une grande vedette. Pagnol fait dire à Fernandel une formule fameuse: *«Le rire, c'est une vertu qui n'appartient qu'aux hommes et que Dieu, peut-être, leur a donnée pour les consoler d'être intelligents.»*

Autre grand film de 1938, *La femme du boulanger*, tiré de *Jean le Bleu* de Giono, avec Raimu et Ginette Leclerc. Film sur le mythe du pain qui n'est plus pétri le jour où le boulanger décide de ne plus en fabriquer parce que sa femme est partie avec son amant. Pour avoir à nouveau du pain, le village entier part à la recherche de l'épouse volage. Pagnol tourne ce film dans le village du Castellet et Raimu rouspète parce qu'il n'aime pas tourner en extérieurs, car le vent et les arbres le gênent! *La femme du boulanger* est un film sensuel et cruel.

Au moment où la guerre de 1939 éclate, les Studios de Marcel Pagnol sont en pleine activité. Pagnol tourne *La fille du Puisatier* qui réunit Fernandel, Raimu et Josette Day. Ce film, pour des raisons pratiques, sera tourné en «temps historique». Le spectateur pourra sentir vibrer l'époque de la déclaration de guerre au premier discours du maréchal Pétain. Cette histoire d'un puisatier qui n'a que des filles dont l'une, amoureuse d'un aviateur, tombe enceinte de ce dernier, reprend de nombreux thèmes pagnolesques: l'amour du travail de la terre, l'ouvrier simplet, la fille-mère, la beauté de la campagne, le retour du fils prodigue..

La France est coupée en deux zones, en 1940. Pagnol veut créer, en Provence, la cité du cinéma. Il possède déjà les studios de la rue Jean Mermoz à Marseille, mais il achète le château de la Buzine (dont il se souviendra lorsqu'il écrit *Le Chateau de ma mère*) pour y mettre son Hollywood provençal! Malheureusement ce projet n'aboutira pas. Pagnol écrit des films pour sa compagne, Josette Day, mais ni *La prière aux étoiles* ni *Arlette et l'Amour* ne convaincront le public et les critiques. On oubliera facilement aussi *La Belle Meunière* avec le chanteur Tino Rossi qui interprète le compositeur Lizt!

L'après-guerre et le testament cinématographique

Après la libération, Marcel Pagnol tourne *Näis* et tombe amoureux de sa jeune vedette, Jacqueline Bouvier, qu'il épousera par la suite. Dans cette adaptation d'une nouvelle de Zola, Fernandel joue le rôle d'un bossu amoureux d'une jeune sauvageonne.

Le 4 mars 1946, Pagnol est élu à l'Académie Française: sur le pommeau de son épée est gravée une croix de Malte, symbole des premiers appareils de projection (la croix de Malte était la pièce mécanique qui assurait le déroulement de la pellicule image par image) Entre temps Raimu est mort. Pagnol écrit:

«Ainsi tu es mort, mais tu n'es pas disparu et je peux mesurer aujourd'hui la reconnaissance que nous devons à la lampe magique qui rallume les génies éteints, qui refait danser les danseuses mortes, et qui rend à notre tendresse le sourire des amis perdus.»[4]

En 1950, Fernandel joue dans une nouvelle version filmée de *Topaze* et Bourvil dans *Le Rosier de Madame Husson*. Pagnol réalise le premier et adapte le second d'après Maupassant. En 1952, il tourne, avec sa femme Jacqueline dans le rôle principal, le magnifique *Manon des Sources* qui ne deviendra un livre intitulé *L'Eau des Collines* qu'une fois le film sorti.

Le complot d'Ugolin (Rellys) et du papet (Poupon) pour cacher la source de Jean de Florette et la vengeance de sa fille son't un hymne cruel à cette terre de Provence où l'eau est plus précieuse que tout l'or de la Banque de France.. Ce film, c'est l'épopée de la Provence; cette fois Pagnol célèbre le mythe de l'eau avec toute sa troupe et la femme qu'il aime. Cette première version de *Manon des Sources* connaîtra, malgré une durée de plus de trois heures, un succès public important et constitue d'une certaine manière son testament cinématographique.

L'adaptation des *Lettres de mon Moulin* est tournée sur les lieux chers à Alphonse Daudet en 1953. Pagnol choisit L'Elixir du Révérend Père Gaucher, les Trois Messes Basses et Le secret de Maître Cornille. Ce sera le dernier film de Marcel Pagnol. Dans son beau livre consacré à Pagnol, Claude Beylie écrit:

> *«Le temps des moulins à vent est passé, celui du cinéma tel que le concevait Pagnol aussi.. Il est temps de prendre congé..»*[5]

Marcel Pagnol, déçu par les critiques, ferme ses studios et abandonne le cinéma (il refera cependant un court métrage d'après Daudet, *Le Curé de Cucugnan*, en 1967). Il se retire à La Treille avec Jacqueline à qui il présente ses collines, son vent, son ciel d'azur. La suite appartient au temps des jolis souvenirs d'enfance.

Le cinéma de Marcel Pagnol, cet œuvre immense de vingt-quatre films, appartient à la merveilleuse histoire de la lanterne magique et au chant du vent à travers les feuilles des arbres . . . On peut lui appliquer ce propos de Bertrand Tavernier sur l'œuvre de John Ford:

> *«Ce cinéma-là, c'est l'épopée aux portes de la légende»..*

Le temps des souvenirs

La production et la réalisation cinématographiques de Pagnol s'arrêtent donc au milieu des années 50 et s'il abandonne la *caméra*, il reprend la plume. Comme par accident. Du moins, c'est ce qu'il nous raconte au cours d'une émission télévisée *Ciné Pagnol*, réalisée en 1972 par Georges Folgoas et présentée par Pierre Tchernia.[6] Au cours d'un dîner chez Pierre Lazareff, la femme de celui-ci l'encourage à écrire pour le magazine *ELLE* qu'elle dirigeait à l'époque une série de feuilles racontant ses souvenirs d'enfance. Promesse qu'il fait un peu à la légère dans l'euphorie communicative de la fin d'un banquet convivial et promesse qu'il exécute le surlendemain pour que le factotum qui vient en bicyclette chercher les six feuillets requis ne revienne pas au magazine les mains vides, avec les conséquences fâcheuses que cela aurait pour son emploi. C'est ainsi que sont nés les fameux souvenirs d'enfance *La Gloire de*

«Ce n'était pas un monument historique, mais l'immense demeure d'un bourgeors du Second Empire.»

mon père. Le château de ma mère (1957) et *Le temps des secrets* (1959). On peut difficilement parler de grand projet au départ, mais l'art naît souvent de la contrainte. C'est par ces œuvres qu'il s'est révélé comme un maître conteur, un prosateur de génie qui, selon son propre aveu, n'avait jamais écrit que des répliques.

A la lecture de ses souvenirs, on s'aperçoit entre autres choses que, comme au cinéma, Pagnol y privilégie la parole. Jacques Bens l'a remarquablement analysé dans son livre sur Pagnol lorsqu'il écrit que dans ses ouvrages de prose ou de fiction *«on découvre beaucoup plus le son d'une voix que les arabesques d'une plume»*[7] Pagnol n'a jamais perdu le don de la réplique, le goût de la galéjade . . . Car il s'agit bien de souvenirs grossis, simplifiés, embellis. Nous sommes loin du néo-réalisme cinématographique.

Les avatars de Manon des Sources

Et pourtant Pagnol semble hanté par son testament cinématographique, *Manon des Sources*, qui était, comme on l'a vu plus haut, à la fois un hymne cruel à la Provence des années 1920 et une mythification de l'Eau comme force féconde et source de vie. Le succès de la publication de ses souvenirs d'enfance lui a sans doute donné l'envie de transposer le scénario de son film en un roman (s'agit-il vraiment d'un roman?) en deux parties réunies sous le titre *L'Eau des Collines*. L'histoire de la sauvageonne Manon, on le sait, lui aurait été racontée par un vieux paysan et a, comme on l'a vu, inspiré le film de 1952. Lorsque Pagnol le remanie dix ans plus tard, il le fait précéder de l'épisode *Jean de Florette* et, à la fin de *Manon des Sources*, donne une interprétation tragique au dénouement: la fin de César Soubeyran, victime du destin. Il s'agit là d'une importante transformation de l'histoire originale; certes la structure du mélodrame demeure la même: Acte I – Le complot maléfique des ruraux contre le citadin détenteur du savoir. Acte II – La vengeance de Manon. Dans le dernier acte, la catharsis est atteinte d'une manière ambiguë; fin heureuse de conte de fées avec l'hymen du prince-instituteur et de la bergère des collines et fin tragique de César Soubeyran frappé par la fatalité antique; le sortilège d'Oedipe à rebours, puisque c'est le père qui anéantit l'amour de sa vie et plus tard tue son fils sans le savoir. La révélation de ce coup du sort par le truchement de Delphine (clin d'œil au mythologue?) terrasse littéralement le vieux rat des champs.

C'est précisément ce changement dans le dénouement de l'œuvre originelle de Pagnol qui a poussé Claude Berri à se lancer dans un *remake* à hauts risques en 1985–86.

«La chose la plus tragique, c'est que le Papet apprend qu'il est responsable indirectement de la mort de son propre fils, en découvrant ce lien de parenté. C'est ce qui donne au Papet cette dimension dans le livre; dans le film de Pagnol, il a un tout petit rôle, il n'existe pas . . . Une autre chose m'a attiré, c'est que Pagnol ait écrit ce livre en cinéaste. C'est extrêmement visuel . . . Bien sûr, il a fallu resserrer, faire des ellipses, choisir.»[8]

Car si Claude Berri a suivi les pas, sinon le regard de Pagnol dans son entreprise d'adaptation – Pagnol, qui, comme nous l'avons vu plus haut, a adapté au cinéma Giono et Daudet, autres conteurs provençaux-pour l'Eau des Collines, il le faisait en troisième main pour ainsi dire, après une première version cinématographique originale et à partir d'une transposition seconde d'ordre littéraire et artistique. L'entreprise de Claude Berri a eu quelques caractéristiques notables: d'abord cela a été un travail de longue haleine, une gestation de 9 mois, tant à l'extérieur – surtout dans des lieux bien provençaux (Vaugines au pied du Lubéron, Cuges près d'Aubagne) – qu'à l'intérieur (Studio de France à Paris) ; ensuite, les deux volets de l'épopée pagnolesque ont été filmés simultanément, le tout grâce à des moyens financiers colossaux, du moins dans l'histoire du cinéma français; cela a aussi permis aux techniciens de la photographie et notamment à Bruno Nuytten ainsi qu'au metteur en scène lui-même d'exprimer leur talent sans contrainte. Claude Berri était, comme Pagnol du reste, à la fois producteur et réalisateur de *Jean de Florette/Manon des Sources*.

Le résultat a été probant en ce sens que le dyptique de Berri a connu un succès commercial et populaire important et a contribué à remettre Pagnol au goût du jour. Il a été l'événement de l'année cinématographique 1987. L'accueil de la critique cinématographique a été mitigé. Tous ont reconnu le talent et le métier de Claude Berri et de son équipe, ont salué la *performance* des vedettes têtes d'affiche (Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, Daniel Auteuil, et Emmanuelle Béart) Certains estiment que, si Claude Berri respecte très souvent le texte même de Pagnol, il en propose cinématographiquement une interprétation très différente. La gageure, bien sûr, pour Berri était de refaire à 30 ans d'intervalle une épopée régionaliste alors que tout s'est transformé: les savoir faire comme les savoir-vivre dans une campagne désertée par les paysans aujourd'hui remplacés par les rats des villes écologistes à la culture livresque, comme Jean de Florette. Le verdict général est que, de ce point de vue, il a plutôt réussi cette adaptation.

Le reproche majeur qu'on lui fait est d'avoir abandonné, voire trahi l'essence de la cinématurgie de Pagnol et, d'une certaine manière, la place du verbe avec ses emphases qui est le trait de l'écriture pagnolienne, que ce soit la réplique théâtrale ou le mot d'auteur. On lui reproche également de mettre en avant les héros du drame, dans *Jean de Florette* notamment Papet, Ugolin et Jean de Florette au détriment des personnages secondaires, le chœur antique des villageois où il n'y a plus aucune individualité. Dans la mise à plat dramatique du texte, le mythe de l'eau est réduit au rang de ressort dramatique. L'unité du premier film, ce n'est plus l'eau, mais l'échec tragique de l'innocent face à la roublardise paysanne. Dans le second volet l'innocence bafouée sera vengée. Le propos de Berri est cependant clairement identifié par l'un de ses critiques:

«Conscient de son incapacité à retrouver la vérité intrinsèque d'un cinéma qui s'inscrivait au présent, il a joué à fond la carte de la «reproduction» dans des conditions autres, où il s'agit moins de dire ou de laisser advenir la vérité d'une situation, d'une époque, d'un décor vécus de l'intérieur par des personnages que d'en mettre en évidence la théâtralité, l'élan opératique, l'universalité.»[9]

La deuxième partie *Manon des Sources* a indéniablement fait vibrer bien des spectateurs et téléspectateurs mais a déçu certains critiques. Cette volonté d'universalité a été elle-même contestée ou présentée comme une faiblesse. L'écrasante majorité des spectateurs des années 1986 et des suivantes seraient des rats des villes et, à vouloir éviter le piège d'une imagerie d'Epinal fabriquée à Marseille, éviter la tentation du folklore régionaliste, Claude Berri aurait vidé personnages de leur substance au profit des paysages, au profit de la qualité de la lumière méditerranéenne au centre de la tragédie antique. La musique sature le film et fait oublier les bruits caractéristiques de la garrigue que Pagnol n'hésitait pas à enregistrer en substance dans son *Manon des Sources*. Dans le film de Berri, *«les acteurs n'ont plus à interpréter que des figures abstraites de leur contexte et de leur environnement matériel, au lieu d'être des personnages d'essence théâtrale, ils doivent en donner l'apparence, jouer la théâtralité, la recomposer à chaque instant . . . ils sont presque tous excellents . . . Chez Pagnol, le théâtre est leur essence, ici il n'est plus que le mode d'existence qu'ils se donnent On les admire, on ne les croit pas».*[10]

Question de perception, bien sûr. Et ce dilemme universalité-temporalité est inhérent à toute entreprise artistique et ne se résout très souvent que par le paradoxe. Question d'interprétation aussi, bien que l'unanimité se fasse sur la qualité de l'ouvrage réalisé, qui a aussi le mérite d'être apprécié du grand public. Certainement les deux volets de l'œuvre ont une résonance différente qui réflète sans doute le texte original. Lorsque la traduction anglaise a été publiée par A. Deutsch en 1988, Godfrey Hodgson qui en faisait la revue dans un quotidien londonien suggérait une comparaison intéressante: en passant de la première partie à la seconde, c'est comme si l'on passait du monde de *Tess* à celui de *Under the Greenwood Tree*, ou encore du monde de Zola à celui de *Clochemerle*.

Il semble bien que dans sa version filmée Berri ait évité volontairement cette allure «Clochemerle», tout en respectant les types pagnolesques: l'instituteur et le curé, mais en sourdine, sans emphase. Les familiers de Pagnol lui reprocheront cette minimalisation, car l'œuvre de Gabriel Chevallier était un des livres de chevet de l'académicien.

Les chroniques de l'enfance à la Belle Epoque

Quatre ans après l'adaptation de Claude Berri, Yves Robert s'attaque à l'adaptation du best-seller de la littérature pour la jeunesse en France, *les Souvenirs d'enfance*, que Pagnol avait commencés pour le magazine *ELLE* plus de 30 ans auparavant. Pourquoi? D'aucuns diraient qu'après plusieurs années de loisir, il s'etait remis à la mise en scène sur un sujet qui lui tenait à cœur:

«Ça me paraissait un témoignage sur l'enfance tout à fait exceptionnel, et tout d'un coup de lire ce qui aurait pu m'arriver à travers Marcel Pagnol, et sa langue, et sa simplicité de langue . . . Toute cette construction, toute cette émotion que j'ai reçue en le lisant, j'ai tout de suite vu un petit garçon courant dans les collines, d'une certaine façon, moi, et j'ai eu envie de raconter ça.»[11]

Raconter est bien le maître mot, le point charnière entre deux esthétiques. Toute la problématique de l'adaptation cinématographique est là: passer d'une écriture vocale caractéristique des œuvres en prose de Pagnol à un langage visuel. La dépendance d'un langage par rapport à l'autre est parfois lourde à porter. Cette question s'est posée dès les origines du cinéma. Tandis que le jeune Marcel Pagnol parcourait la garrigue près de la Bastide Neuve au pied du Garlaban, en 1902 Ferdinand Zecca signait la première adaptation de *L'Assommoir* sous le titre des *Victimes de l'Alcoolisme*. Dans ce cas comme dans celui des Souvenirs d'enfance, le problème qui se pose est de savoir si l'œuvre littéraire est respectée ou détournée? Dans le cas de *L'Eau de Collines*. la question se posait différemment, puisqu'au point de départ il s'agissait du «roman» d'un cinéaste. Claude Berri le reconnâit bien volontiers:

«Qu'est-ce qu'on entend par fidélité? Il a bien fallu que je restructure, que je reconstruise et que je donne un rythme, mais l'auteur de Florette *et de* Manon, *c'est pas moi, c'est Pagnol.»*[12]

Mis à part son premier essai de jeunesse *Pirouettes*, peut-on vraiment dire que Pagnol soit un romancier? Il s'est lui-même vu comme dramaturge, dialoguiste et cinéaste avant tout et dans *Confidences* il prend à partie les romanciers:

«Les romanciers nous accusent souvent et en toute bonne foi de faire de la psychologie rudimentaire ou des effets un peu gros: c'est parce qu'ils n'ont pas l'expérience de notre métier.»[12]

Yves Robert a-t-il trop respecté la «lettre» des Souvenirs, le côté littéraire de l'œuvre de Pagnol?

Pour *La gloire de mon père*, certains critiques lui en font le reproche:

«..Il a eu tort de s'en tenir à la lettre au détriment d'une image qui entre parfois en redondance avec la voix off de la narration».[13]

Ce même critique est prêt à reconnaître les qualités de l'adaptation d'Yves Robert et son aptitude à recréer la poésie de l'évocation du «grand paysage de la vie» du jeune Pagnol, l'atmosphère lumineuse et parfumée de ses jeunes années.

Bien sûr, quand on parle d'interprétation littérale, il s'agit du texte au ras des pages, car Yves Robert lui aussi a fait des coupures, des raccords. Dans le premier film *La Gloire de mon père*, immédiatement avant et après le morceau de bravoure des bartavelles, les séquences sont sorties tout droit du livre *Le Château de ma mère:* Lili et les pièges, le Grand Duc et l'orage dans le Taoumé, la discussion en famille, la lettre et la fugue, la retraite et la lettre déchirée, l'homélie de l'instituteur, l'orthographe, les adieux à Lili et le retour à Marseille à reculons. La séquence finale reprend l'image de Marcel en haut de la barre brandissant les deux bartavelles du pére! Ce qui donne un point d'orgue aussi bien qu'un écho au titre. Le début du second film *Le Château de ma mère* commence à la deuxième partie du livre du même titre, puis à partir de la rencontre avec Isabelle, nous sommes dans *Le temps des secrets*, pour revenir en suite au «texte» du livre *Le Château de ma mère* avec l'évocation du raccourci entrepris à plusieurs reprises en toute illégalité à travers les propriétés et maisons de maître

«Le canal coulait en haut d'un petit remblai: le lit de ciment n'avait que trois mètres de large.»

qui longent le canal, pour parvenir plus tôt à la villa de rêve pour des vacances de rêve.

Là, Yves Robert rejoint les qualités de l'admirable conteur Pagnol dans son traitement de l'aventure et de la clandestinité. Dans les personnages de Bouzigue, du Garde et de son molosse, il s'agit moins de caricature que de transformation poétique, caractéristique du conte de fées, profil «rudimentaire», pour reprendre le mot de Pagnol, des bons et des mauvais génies.

Certes, les deux films sont différents: dans le premier, surtout centré sur le fils, le ton est plus évocateur de ce coin de Provence très IIIme République, cléricale et anticléricale, essentiellement rurale; dans le second, surtout centrée sur la mère, le ton est plus nostalgique, plus émouvant. La figure du père bien qu'omniprésente en a peut-être été réduite par rapport à l'original et à l'originel. Les thèmes traités ont en tous cas trouvé un écho dans la sensibilité contemporaine avec ses aspirations à l'écologie et à la tolérance. Cela explique sans doute le succès populaire de ces adaptations qui sont comme un écho de la popularité de Pagnol en France et à l'étranger.

Conclusion

Marcel Pagnol n'est pas le premier académicien à connaître la gloire et la popularité de son vivant et *post mortem*, sans pour autant attirer une recherche esthétique considérable en France du moins, avec entre autres une exception à l'Université de Provence, en cette année du centenaire de Pagnol.[14] Il tient pourtant une place honorable dans les manuels du secondaire français surtout dans le cycle élémentaire. Dans les grands classiques du secondaire, les Castex et Surer, les Lagarde et Michard, c'est surtout sur l'homme de théâtre et sur le cinématographe que l'on insiste.

On vient de voir que l'œuvre la plus importante et sans doute celle qui restera est celle de Pagnol cinéaste intimement liée du reste à son théâtre avec la controverse que l'on sait, mais résolue plus haut: l'œuvre cinématographique de Marcel Pagnol dépasse le théâtre filmé, le cinéma bavard et crée le néo-réalisme avant la lettre pour atteindre la dimension mythique de l'épopée tout en restituant une province au temps d'une époque révolue. Marcel Pagnol est bel et bien le John Ford français. Mais il a été écrivain aussi et surtout par le truchement du cinéma, notamment dans ses dernières œuvres de prose, qui ont été adaptées elles aussi, (juste retour des choses?) par la génération suivante de cinéastes: Claude Berri et Yves Robert. Leurs diptyques respectifs ont amplifié pour le meilleur et pour le pire l'évocation de la Provence dans l'œuvre de Pagnol.

Notes et références

1. M. PAGNOL *Cinématurgie de Paris*. ed de Fallois, coll. Fortunio, 1970, pp. 8–13.
2. *Le Journal* était consacré aux Arts et Spectacles et a maintenant disparu.
3. Il serait intéressant de se rapporter à ce sujet à l'article célébre d'Alexandre Astruc intitulé «La caméra Stylo» paru à l'époque de la Nouvelle Vague dans *Les Cahiers du Cinéma*.
4. Lettre manuscrite reproduite *in-extenso* dans *Il était une fois Marcel Pagnol* par Raymond Castans, ed de Fallois, coll. Fortunio, 1995, L'adieu au géant, pp. 111–113.
5. C. BEYLIE, *Marcel Pagnol*, ed Seghers, coll. Cinéaste d'aujourd'hui, 1977.
6. émission dont le tournage est évoqué dans un ouvrage récent de Philippe BIRET *A la recherche de Marcel Pagnol*. Editions Jeanne Lafitte, 1995, pp. 76–81.
7. Jacques BENS, *Pagnol*, collection Ecrivains de toujours, Editions du Seuil, 1994, p. 133.
8. Cité dans *Les saisons et les jours*, par Vincent Ostria, in Cahiers du Cinéma, n° 380, pp. 61–2.
9. S. TOUBIANA, *L'Opéra Pagnol*, Cahiers du Cinéma, n° 387, p. 50.
10. J. MAGNY, Le cinéma du Papet, Cahiers du Cinéma, n° 391, p 54.
11. Propos recueillis pour l'émission scolaire de la BBC, *Voix de France*, Programme 1, Pagnol et la Provence.
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Jean de Florette in the French Classroom

Sharon Heleine

Airedale and
Wharfedale College
Leeds

La première règle de la morale bastidienne. 'On ne s'occupe pas des affaires des autres. La seconde règle, c'était qu'il fallait considérer les Bastides comme le plus beau village de Provence.

In 1991 I used the film of *Jean de Florette* as course material for a class of adult French students. *A vous la France, France Extra, Franc Parler, La Belle Vie* had been swallowed up by this group of adult students, who came to French once a week at Airedale and Wharfedale College. *Authentik* was not yet on the market, and I was at a loss as to choosing course material. Thus the College's purchase of the videos *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des Sources* was heaven sent or as *Jean* himself would say *Le Paradou de Zola*. I settled down to six weeks of transcribing the script.

Choosing the film

The wide variety of ability among a class of adult learners is a regular problem. Choosing a film as course material helps to solve this problem. With a carefully chosen film, students from near beginner to advanced level can enjoy and benefit from such a course. The film will stretch and engross each student individually: students will respond to the challenge of the film as much as their ability allows. At the end of the course, the student's confidence will have soared, and a new cinematic world will be theirs. They feel totally immersed in the culture, having studied not only the language but having heard the music and sound effects (Verdi's Force of Destiny) seen the locations and absorbed the lifestyle of the characters. Pagnol's wit does in fact shine more brilliantly in the book than in the film:

Ugolin, suprême espoir de la race des Soubeyran.

One might argue that characterisation and description are perhaps more vivid and poetic in the book.

Aimée, toujours bien coiffée et soigneusement vêtue, vaquait aux travaux du ménage comme une dame qui remplace par hasard sa bonne. Le grand air l'avait embellie et elle chantait en s'éveillant. .

However, by the end of the year and on their own initiative, nearly every student had read the book in addition to studying the film. They would not have read it, had we been using a traditional course book. Claude Berri's interpretation of the characters added to the joy of reading the book.

The potential for learning is wide and flexible. Grammatical points and vocabulary fix themselves indelibly into the mind via the ear, the eye, the action and further practice. What is more, one understands the meaning, context, or register of an expression, having seen the likes of Depardieu or Montand use it.

The choice of film is crucial to the success of a course. Ideally the film should be inoffensive, so as not to embarrass any students. The script should use the minimum of slang. Delon and Belmondo *policiers* are full of such interesting expressions, worthy of a study in their own right: however the slang of these films renders them inaccessible to most British students. There should be a strong story line, which is absorbing and gripping. The pace of the film should be able to maintain the enthusiasm of the students.

Having chosen your film, and checked its suitability, you need the script. You might be able to buy the script of the film. If you can't, then a lengthy but relaxing job needs to be tackled. Do not try to write the script from the video: make an audio cassette and transcribe the script from that.

Transcribing the script may well take hundreds of hours. If this task does not appeal, split the job among several colleagues. Foreign language assistants and foreign students might be persuaded to help to transcribe.

Preparing the extracts for class use

Once you have your script, divide the film into as many episodes as you can use. I split *Jean de Florette* into approximately 25 episodes of between five and ten minutes viewing, dividing it at natural breaks. Once you have cut the film into small sections decide what you want to do with each part.

As mentioned above, films can be used for a wide variety of ability, in a wide variety of teaching styles. Each week you can ask the students to recap on the story so far: this is useful for absentees from the previous lesson, and practises speaking skills. Having updated the group I would suggest what the plan for the day's episode was, show it, then complete whatever accompanying worksheet or role play had been planned. The following list covers some of the techniques I used, and could be completed by the students either individually, in pairs or in groups.

Worksheets

Multiple Choice Questionnaires
Comprehension Questions
True or False
Grids to Complete
Find the French For…
Gap Filling Exercises

These exercises might aim to focus on general comprehension of the story, or concentrate on 'trawling' for a particular word or phrase. The following illustrate one of each.

Marquez chaque phrase vrai ou faux.

1 *Le fleuriste offre cinquante sous pour chaque œillet.*
2 *Les œillets ont besoin d'autant d'eau que deux hommes.*
3 *Si Ugolin arrose 500 plantes, la citerne sera vide au bout de huit jours.*
Etc

Soulignez les verbes et écrivez-les à coté de chaque ligne.

Example

____________ *Il me semble que j'entends parler ta propre mère!*
semble/entends/parler *Il me semble que j'entends parler ta propre mère!*
____________ *Il me semble que j'entends parler ta propre mère!*
____________ *Quand on a commencé d'ètrangler le chat, il*
____________ *faut le finir. Crois-moi va! S'il fait une petite*
____________ *réussite cette année, il va continuer.*

Speaking practice

Role plays
Describing a Scene to a group who have not seen it
Explaining what happens when there is no dialogue in an extract
Description of a particular type, for example character, appearance, setting
Speculation – using the future or conditional tenses on what will happen or would happen if.....

The role plays used the outline of a dialogue in English, which the students translated mentally or with written notes, then acted out with a partner

Ugolin	César
There' s something that bothers me	
	What?
The water	
	What water?
A carnation drinks like a man. To water my plants, I had to tear the skin of my hands on the rope of the well.	
	You only have to put in a tank with a pump.
But if you water 500 plants the tank will be empty at the end of four days.	
	Ah that's a problem

Another speaking exercise was describing a scene to a group who had not seen it.

Half the class (group 1) left the room, with this note:

«Vous verrez un extrait que vos camerades ne verront pas. Regardez-le plusieurs fois, en écrivant des notes. Puis rédigez un résumé de l'extrait. Vous allez le décrire aux autres, avec l'aide de votre résumé. Dans cet extrait il s'agit d'un orage.»

Group 1 viewed the extract and made notes about it before moving to another room or Learner Resource Centre to work out together how to report the scene to the other group. While they were doing this, Group 2 were viewing their extract, and making notes, to report back later.

Text analysis

- Jigsaws
- Definitions of words
- synonyms and antonyms
- Mismatched lists of vocabulary
- Different registers of language

Grammar

As much or as little as the students need. A particular grammatical point is often repeated several times in one short passage. The film opens with many imperatives:

Attends!
Ne te dérange pas!
Lance-moi juste la clé!
Rentre!

Later on there are examples of superlatives:

Indiquez-nous le plus court chemin pour aller au plantier.
Je ne vais pas vous indiquer le plus court, mais le plus facile.

Students and teachers continue to use the film, giving positive feedback. I have watched the film countless times, and I still close the book with regret. Pagnol's humour sparkles and his wise reflections give an insight into human nature. All this in simple clear French, written in a story which makes you ignore time and the exam candidates you are supposed to be invigilating!

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Communications strategy and cultural tourism: the case of Fontvieille (Bouches-du-Rhône)

Geoffrey Hare
University of
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Every large town in France now has its communications strategy and communication unit (often, as in Nancy, co-ordinated from and reporting directly to the mayor's office). Distinctive market positions are defined, corporate images are created to endow the town with a recognisable personality and these are communicated through various channels with the aid of logos and slogans ('Montpellier la surdouée', 'Nancy un style de ville'). The aim is to encourage inward investment, sometimes to promote tourism (France is after all the world leader as a tourist destination), to 'susciter l'implication des citoyens et de les faire adhérer à ces objectifs' [Sperling: 20–21] and always, at the very least indirectly, for electoral purposes: to heighten the profile of the mayor and his or her team, and to publicise their work for the municipality to the electorate. Informing the citizen of how public funds are being spent can also be seen as a part of the accountability function within the local democratic process [Parker: 163]. For an organisation such as a municipality, there are at least two distinct publics, therefore, one internal, one external.

Different channels of communication are more appropriate for different aims and for different publics. The three main instruments of promotion used are commercial advertising, public relations and press relations. These *gros moyens* are usually backed up by the publication of highly targeted brochures, aimed for example at tourists or at firms, and other promotional material: T-shirts and stickers, pens and *pin's*, key-rings and diaries [Parker (1993): 160]. Finally, the provision of information banks on the *minitel* (with over six million terminals in use in France) is becoming as important for reaching the **internal** public as the more traditional *bulletin municipal*.

For towns, commercial advertising traditionally means the written press, but is starting to mean television and is used to create and reinforce awareness and to start building a new image (see the example of Clermont-Ferrand advertising on national television in 1994. trying to overcome its fragile economic position as a one industry, indeed one firm town – Michelin).

Public relations is often built around events organised by the town or with which the town is associated through sponsorship or participation. Some events have achieved national notoriety and are powerful vectors of image: whether relatively new ones such as *Le Printemps de Bourges* or *Francofolies de La Rochelle* festivals of French song, or the Montpellier Classical Music Festival and the Avignon Theatre Festival, an institution for over three decades.

Press coverage in the form of articles offers much more credibility than direct advertising, in that they seem to have a more objective source. However articles emerge from good contacts within the press, a knowledge of news values and the production by the *Service de communication* of a good *dossier de presse* to make the journalist's task easier. [Sperling: 37–42] Major press and television coverage is offered by the *Tour de France* cycle race: paying for the privilege of being a *ville d'étape* ensures notoriety during the television sports coverage, but also guarantees portraits of the town and its attractions and local specialities, including the obligatory interview with the mayor, as offered by such programmes as *Autour du tour* (France 3: 12.05 to 12.45, over the 3 weeks of the *Tour*), preceding coverage of each day's stage. In 1994, for example, the year of the opening of the Channel Tunnel and of the TGV

Nord, Calais and Lille invested in this public relations exercise as *villes d'étape* (as indeed did Portsmouth).

Of the *villes moyennes* (15–90,000 inhabitants) about half have a communications strategy, according to a recent study [Alvis], and most devote between 150,000 and one million francs per year to it. Their targets are mainly the local inhabitants ('proximité et électorat obligent'), but also, in two-thirds of cases, the media ('amplification des informations') [Alvis]. The 26 French regions, with their own elected bodies with large powers and budgets since the decentralisation law of 1983, are also rapidly following suit. There is also evidence that the most dynamic of the smallest *collectivités territoriales*, the *communes rurales*, despite the restrictions of their size, are beginning to see the advantages of investment in communication. This article is a case study of the communication strategy of one such rural *commune* in Provence.

The economic life and hence the social infrastructure of small villages in Provence are under pressure in the 1990s, especially during a period of economic recession and unemployment. Following the rural exodus and the mechanisation and industrialisation of agriculture, the concentration of the retail sector around the small number of hypermarket chains, the need to provide a range of choice of studies at the level of secondary education implying large establishments with big catchment areas, the infrastructure of a *commune* of 3,600 inhabitants such as Fontvieille (10 km from Arles, 25 km from Avignon but not on the main road between them) has been gradually reducing over the last 20 years, not to say the last century and more. Alphonse Daudet's *Lettres de mon moulin* (1869), conceived, inspired and set in Fontvieille and the vicinity, while celebrating Provençal life and culture in the collection as whole, summed up the sense of loss of a self-sufficient rural way of life in one of his stories, *Le secret de maître Cornille*, about the local miller, who had seen all his business and thus his livelihood taken away by the competition of the steam-driven flour mills of the nearby town of Tarascon. Peter Mayle's modern picture of another corner of the south east of France in *A Year in Provence* owes much to the conception of the rural paradise established by Daudet, and carried on by Marcel Pagnol in his novels and films (and those of Claude Berri's adaptations of Pagnol more recently): the sun, the colours and smells of Provence (blue sky, light grey rock, dark green pines and cypresses, black olives, purple lavender, rosemary, and thyme), the unhurried rural way of life, the love of good food are all part of Daudet's Provence. Following the invasion of British tourists into Mayle's village the locals are reputedly upset at seeing their supposedly idyllic way of life disappearing fast. This has not prevented Fontvieille and its young mayor, Frédéric Mison, from conceiving their own communications strategy to put their village more boldly on the France's cultural tourism map. The difference between the two cases is that the one village had no say in its sudden notoriety, whereas in the other the local community is consciously at the heart of the project.

Their aim is to celebrate their own piece of cultural heritage and thereby affirm their local pride, to stimulate regional and national awareness of the village as a centre of cultural tourism, to regenerate the local economy based now more on services than on agriculture (10 restaurants, 11 hotels from 4 star to 1 star with a total of 186 rooms, 4 shops, 4 cafes, and local artisans) and maintain the social infrastructure.

The sole claim to national fame of Fontvieille is the presence in the *garrigue* above the village of the very windmill featured in Daudet's classic collection of short stories. Or rather the alleged windmill, because it is in many ways a media creation in itself, in various stages. Daudet himself, some years after the newspaper serialisation and initial (not overly successful) publication of the work, subsequently having made a name and the beginnings of a literary fortune with a series of realist novels, came under criticism over the authenticity of his work, and was tempted to establish some kind of retrospective ownership of a mill in the vicinity of his cousins' comfortable château de Montauban (on the outskirts of the village) where he had conceived or heard a number of the stories. They had in fact been written in Paris, rather than, as the narrator figure implies, being letters sent to his newspaper editor from his austere and solitary Provençal retreat, a disused windmill, the symbolic and nostalgic victim of economic 'progress'. Despite the claims in his Introduction which takes the form of a contract of sale for a windmill, he had never owned or lived in one. It was a mere narrative device, and his later enquiries were not followed up by any purchase. The lack of importance of the work during Daudet's literary career is suggested in the title's absence from a list of titles engraved on his large burial vault in the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris. It is only in the 20th century that the work has taken its (eminent) place in the children's literary canon, being part of the official national curriculum set texts for primary school children since the turn of the century. Initial municipal consciousness of the potential interest in the mill led the local hairdresser, Honoré Coudière, to persuade the local council in 1935 to purchase and restore the most prominently placed and best preserved of four local windmills as a tiny Daudet museum and focus of local cultural activities. The local council's 1994 initiative can be seen as a relaunching of Fontvieille as the spiritual home of the literary heritage of Daudet and a refreshing of the brand image of the village which has come to owe much of its livelihood to the Daudet industry.

In the domain of marketing for tourism the notion of the tourism product is a key concept, but a complex one. [Holloway & Plant, 14–15, 110–111] It can comprise a place (a holiday destination), a service (a hotel room, a restaurant, or a museum), sometimes also a tangible product (a T-shirt bearing a town logo). For the most part the tourist product is an intangible, it cannot be inspected or sampled in advance of purchase. The decision to buy (to visit Fontvieille in this case) will be taken according to the consumer's perceptions of the product's features. The features of the tourist product offered on a permanent basis in Fontvieille are a cultural heritage trail ('parcours découverte sur les traces d'Alphonse Daudet'), including the well-preserved four-sailed windmill, with its tiny museum of personal items, photographs and the odd manuscript, a splendid view of the surrounding countryside, a walk though pines and *chênes verts*, with one or two references to spots figuring in the stories, the local manor house (le château de Montauban), where Daudet stayed on his visits to the village and where he met a number of the characters found in the stories, and which now houses a permanent exhibition, 'Bonjour Monsieur Daudet'. A guided tour is available on Tuesdays. Both the mill and the château are now jointly owned by the municipality and the département. This is quite standard fare in the cultural heritage industry: a basis of nostalgia linked to 'l'esprit des lieux', memorabilia, and well-presented information about the man and his work.

However a product needs advertising and marketing to create Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action on the part of the potential consumer (the AIDA model [Martin & Védrine: 139]). What is Fontvieille's communications strategy? The use of brochures in tourist offices throughout the region is a useful reminder to tourists already in the region able to decide to make the detour, and of course the département and region advertise nationally (see the 1994 national television advertising campaign to promote 'les Bouches-du-Rhône en Provence'). However the centre-piece of Fontvieille's communications strategy to create national awareness of their tourist product is the establishment of an annual national prize for children's literature called the Prix Alphonse Daudet du Livre de la Jeunesse. The reason it is likely to attract local and national press coverage in the future as it did this year is that its sponsor is the prestigious Académie Goncourt, whose annual Prix Goncourt every November is eagerly awaited by press and public, not to mention indigent (or indeed more successful) writers, who seek the immense boost in sales brought by the award or even by short-listing.

The association of the Goncourt

Academy and a children's literature prize with Daudet and Fontvieille is not arbitrary. The link can be presented as a natural one in that the names of Daudet and Goncourt are indissolubly linked in literary history. After twenty years of friendship starting off with the *dîners des auteurs sifflés* (Flaubert, Turgenev, Zola, Goncourt and Daudet), Daudet had become an emotional replacement for Edmond de Goncourt's dead younger brother Jules, and the Daudet household in Paris had became a second home for Goncourt, where he died in fact in 1896. Their friendship was such that Alphonse Daudet had become Goncourt's literary executor entrusted with setting up of the Goncourt Academy as an alternative to the Académie Française considered by the Realists and Naturalists of the time no longer to reflect modern developments in literature. In fact Daudet died the following year before this was complete, but he is often considered spiritually the founder member of the Academy, his place in the new Academy being taken by his son Léon.

The second natural choice in this prize is that Daudet's name, through what has become his most published work, has become synonymous with children's literature and no longer with the best-selling realist novels which made his fortune. And Fontvieille of course has the claim to being synonymous with *Lettres de mon moulin*. There are other Provençal towns and villages which could have been competitors for the Daudet heritage: Nîmes, Daudet's birthplace, Tarascon, the setting for the famous Tartarin stories, Arles in connection with *L'Arlésienne* (Daudet's play, Bizet's music), or even Saint-Alban-Auriolles (Ardèche) where the regionalist writer, the late Roger Ferlet, established a Daudet museum in a farm belonging to Daudet's mother's family, *le Mas de la Vignasse*. While there are references to Daudet in the tourist publicity of all of these places, Fontvieille has made the boldest bid to become the 'natural' centre of the Daudet industry in building its image entirely around his most enduring claim to literary celebrity.

The link between the present Goncourt Academy and Fontvieille was re-established via Pagnol's collaborator, Yvan Audouard, the 80-year-old author of film scores, comic essays and Provençal stories, whose second home has been in Fontvieille for many years and whose intercession was vital in bringing the new Goncourt prize to Fontvieille, especially since two members of the Academy, Robert Sabatier and Françoise Mallet-Jorris, had reportedly felt somewhat poorly welcomed on an official visit to Fontvieille some years earlier. Mme Mallet-Jorris had apparently had to change her dress behind a tree, since the *mairie* or the Amis de Daudet had omitted to provide her with a changing room! [*Le Méridional*, and interview with Mme Marie-Madeleine Perret of the Amis d'Alphonse Daudet]

The detail of the events of the press launch for the more recent ceremonies were carefully chosen to augment their news value and attract a France 3 television crew, photographers and journalists. The inaugural children's literature prize was announced and presented on the Ascension day holiday weekend, coinciding with the anniversary of Daudet's birth (13th May 1840), by a member of the Académie Goncourt, Michel Tournier, not only one of France's best known and most respected living novelists, but also a writer of children's stories himself. The occasion was given added newsworthiness by the presence of three other Academy members, its secretary François Nourissier, Daniel Boulanger, and Edmonde Charles-Roux (with her local connections in the Bouches-du-Rhône – her late husband, Gaston Defferre, having been mayor of Marseilles for many years), and of course of Yvan Audouard. The whole weekend was indeed transformed into a literary and cultural jamboree: the signing of books by the national and local authors present, a one-day academic conference on Daudet organised by the Association des Amis d'Alphonse Daudet, bringing together papers by 10 Daudet specialists, the screening in the village cinema of Pagnol's black-and-white classic film *Lettres de mon moulin* (1954), and local glamour and folklore in the shape of this year's *reine d'Arles* (Cathy

Sautecœur) in traditional costume, 30 primary school children singing at the mill, a Provençal bull-fight (*course à la cocarde*) in the Fontvieille arena on the Sunday afternoon and a children's rally inaugurating the Daudet heritage trail, commemorated by special Enfants de Daudet *pin's*.

The winning book, which starts to look secondary to the real message of the proceedings, was *Le papillon de toutes les couleurs* by Didier Daeninckx (author) and Alain Gautier (illustrator).

A useful model enabling us to understand what is happening in promotional events such as this case is the definition of public relations by Grunig and Hunt (p. 8) as 'the management of communication between an organisation and its publics'. The organisation at the origin of the communication event in this case is not so much the village of Fontvieille as the local council, with the initiative taken by a dynamic mayor. Turning to the notion of publics, in addition to the ostensible external target of potential tourists, territorial communication is inevitably aimed at the local citizens and often personalised around the mayor, local electoral politics *oblige*. Mayor Mison, elected on a *Parti socialiste* ticket, was indeed at the centre of events, making various speeches introducing the celebrities. While the overall celebration of the locality's cultural specificity and its regional, indeed national *rayonnement* and the expected economic success of the whole enterprise might be regarded as sufficient in themselves to add to the electoral capital of the mayor's team, the one item which seemed specifically aimed at the local inhabitants was the tribute paid to the very old and very frail local man Honoré Coudière in toasting the new publication of his brief study *Daudet et Fontvieille*. The electoral significance of the events for the mayor's future political career may or may not be recognised on a wider stage than the *commune*. The impressive organisation will not have gone unnoticed by one of the major political figures in the region – the socialist Michel Vauzelle, Minister of Justice in the Bérégovoy government (1992–93), *Conseiller général*, and until the last election, *député* for Arles – present at the weekend's main media event. Another public of the mayor's communications strategy therefore may be regarded as being the small number of local political notables (Vauzelle in particular) who have the power to enhance Mison's political career by recommending him as a socialist candidate for higher regional or national electoral office.

The economic success of the weekend events in themselves was not negligible, bringing a large number of visitors to the village, filling the hotels and restaurants, even though the sale of books was not particularly brisk. What was more important was the longer term effect on the local tourist industry and the wider publicity gained, the 'positioning' or 'branding' effect, associating in the public mind the village of Fontvieille with a national children's literature prize and a symbol of Provençal culture, summed up in the name of the prize, *le priz Alphonse Daudet*, in the same way, if on a much smaller scale, that Stratford has become synonymous with the greatest English dramatist. The mayor of Fontvieille and his team have understood the need to create and maintain such links in the public mind, in such a way that they seem 'natural'. He has been able to create an 'événement médiatique' to convey the desired messages, to a number of different external and internal publics. Regional press and television covered the event, which they perceived to have national resonances. Hardly any of Mison's *administrés* could have been unaware of these events in such a small community. Many of them were directly implicated in one or other of the component parts of the weekend which contained elements of both high and popular culture. The effects on the local economy will certainly concern them all and are still to be felt, but are awaited with some expectation following the spending of a large proportion of the *commune's* budget on communication.

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Introduction

A recent study, commissioned by the GCE Examination Boards and carried out at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (CEM Centre 1994), compared students' grades, attitudes and perceptions of classroom processes across all the Boards, including all those with syllabuses for French. The candidates concerned were those taking the 1993 examination. They formed overall a large and highly representative sample.

In general, the study found standards across the Boards to be 'commendably equivalent'. Although some considerable variations were established between groups of students on all three aspects (grades, attitudes and learning activities), the variations did not correlate closely with any of the Boards or their syllabuses, or even with type of institution, gender or socio-economic measures. In the case of French, the picture proved to be very even, with grades varying only slightly across the Boards in relation to gender and prior achievement, and with girls showing only slightly more positive attitudes. No significant differences were found between Boards or syllabuses on students' perceptions of classroom processes. The picture is thus generally a re-assuring one.

On the other hand, *some* differences do appear in the data, and interesting questions suggest themselves about underlying reasons. It is the purpose of the present article to identify such differences, also to speculate about how differences may be interpreted, and finally to relate these to the study as a whole.

The study

A little more background is needed at the outset. It must be recognized, for instance, that the Boards have long had procedures in place for monitoring their work at its various stages. Even before the adoption of the *Code of Practice* for A and AS Levels in 1994, numerous comparability studies had been undertaken; and more are already envisaged which will focus on issues such as question-difficulty and syllabus-demand. Such systems, however, have thus far been essentially procedural; they have related to common practices in setting, marking and reviewing. Attempts to go further, and to compare raw results across the Boards, for instance, have been beset by inevitable variations in the entry-patterns for each. Then, too, cross-moderation through re-marking involves a level of qualitative judgement which makes for problems of reliability. In a context in which public concern is recognised as still growing, and with intense competition for places in higher education still at issue, an objective study was timely and valuable.

The distinctive feature of the present study, conducted by the well-established *A Level Information Service* (ALIS) at Newcastle, lies not only in the size of the sample and data-base but also in its underlying concept: that of offering to schools a comparative measure of achievement based on the known average GCSE performance of their students, the results to be expected in the light of those scores, and the eventual differences (positive or negative) between the expected grades and those attained. These differences, known as 'residuals', are interpretable by schools in the light of internally-known circumstances and can help shape policy. ALIS of course continues to pass such information back to schools confidentially; for the purposes of the present study, however, data could be aggregated to powerful effect – and even more so when yet more data from a parallel '16+ Value Added' project, being run by the Secondary Heads Association, were included.

The two samples (ALIS and SHA) together covered over 730 schools of all the main types, and over 51,000 students, taking 12 subjects. Candidates entered for French numbered over 7,000, belonging to approximately 600 'syllabus groups' (SGs – i.e. student-groups at the same institution and taking the same syllabus); they had followed between them 10 syllabuses set by 8 Boards (3 from University of London Examination and Assessment Council/ ULEAC).

All were involved in the *grades* analysis; a sub-set (of about 3,000 students in 290 SGs) formed the basis for the analysis of *attitudes* and *learning activities*. The average A Level points-score of students in the whole French sample was 5.5 against a national average of 5.3 (UCAS scale) for that subject. The table below shows the distribution of candidates for French among the Boards, as well as their average points-scores.

Board	No of candidates	av points-score
AEB	1,397	5.25
NEAB	1,277	4.88
NISEAC	102	6.16
OCSEB	517	6.62
UCLES	663	5.45
ULEAC	1,425	5.90
UODLE	1,748	5.51
WJEC	116	6.07
Total	7,245	

It must be noted that for at least two of the Boards (especially for NISEAC and WJEC) relatively small numbers may be skewing the picture slightly. As already suggested, too, the Boards' different entry-patterns constitute a further reason for treating raw data such as these with caution. They are included here essentially to support the claim for a 'large and representative' sample on which ALIS' residuals based analysis was carried out. Certainly, in this form, these data do not support a view that Boards with syllabuses involving course-work (e.g. NEAB) produce higher-than-average grades. Nor is there any immediate grounds for suspecting that grade-differences are a significant issue, particularly as far as the Boards with the lion's share of the candidates are concerned.

The ALIS analysis of grades

On the basis of residuals (variations from known base-lines) aggregated by syllabus group, grade-differences in French (unlike in Chemistry, Geography, History and Maths) were not found to be related to Board or syllabus. Indeed the ALIS report (Tymms and Vincent 1994) notes a 'remarkable consistency' in both connections. Some variations were, however, apparent when controlling for prior achievement and (in an unexpected way) for gender.

The former may simply (and satisfyingly!) suggest that quality of teaching can indeed make a difference. The latter is more complex and requires careful unravelling. Given the 'girls' subject' label so often attached to Languages, and to French in particular, one has every right to register surpise at first that the boys' average (1993) A Level grades in French are ahead of those of the girls. However, as the following table makes clear, there are nearly three times as many girl candidates as boys, who thereby define themselves as a somewhat more select group at A Level. Also, at GCSE overall, these boys evidently performed marginally less well than the girls. Those boys taking French beyond 16 doubtless represent predominantly those who were best at French, while the girls represent a wider spectrum.

	Girls	Boys
Number of students	5,382	1,863
Average GCSE score*	6.10	6.06
Average AL grade (Fr)	5.45	5.73
Residuals (GCSE->AL)	–0.10	0.29

All figures given are for 1993 candidates.

*Average for all GCSE subjects taken; on scale 7=A, 6=B ... 0=U.

In interpreting girls' and boys' residuals, one must see the girls as in a sense doubly handicapped: partly by being the broader, more numerous group described above, and partly by being measured against a slightly higher base-line. (It is clear, too, incidentally, that A Level French students generally are drawn from a very able group, averaging more than B at GCSE. This may in part explain why they go on to score, in French, grades which are slightly higher than the average across all subjects at A Level, as noted earlier.)

From all the above, therefore, it is fair to record, simply, that in 1993 far more girls proceeded to A Level in French than boys; that those boys who did go on performed as well if not better; and that A Level French students did well in relation to A Level students as a whole. There is much to be pleased about in that.

The consistency of grades across syllabuses offers a different kind of re-assurance. Recent years have seen considerable change, in content, focus and style of examination, for Languages at A Level. The trend away from language-plus-set-texts towards language-plus-topic (with or without literary options within topics), as well as the newer-style language-tests and the possibilities of including coursework, might have been expected to produce some significant divergence across syllabuses, if not across Boards. Perhaps the consistency noted by ALIS reflects a greater degree of objectivity in marking language-tasks as against literary essays. Some Boards (e.g. NEAB, in its Paper 1, Section B) do explicitly ear-mark a proportion of marks for non-linguistic content alone, but appropriate and accurate language remains the principal criterion throughout most of the examination.

Attitudes

Data were gained in this connection (from the ALIS-only sub-set) by means of a six-item questionnaire each answered on a five-point scale. An Attitude-to-Subject was derived by computing the average for the six responses, with 5 as high, 1 as low and 3 as roughly 'neutral'. Subjects attracting the highest means were Art and Further Maths; lowest were Chemistry, Economics, French and Physics – as might have been predicted on the basis of these subjects' reputations. Again, however, perspective is required. Art apart, variations were in fact quite slight overall, and the low group's means were merely neutral or just below. Indeed, means for boys in French were almost exactly neutral, those of girls slightly above.

Perhaps we are dealing here with no more than the customary perception of a foreign language as belonging among the 'hard' subjects and as showing some slight degree of enduring gender-bias. Students are not in a position of course to comment on any experience but their own. They can compare their views across the subjects they have taken, but not across syllabuses for any one of them. In that light it is perhaps encouraging that attitudes to French are at worst neutral. It is certainly encouraging, too, that there is no evidence in the ALIS study for students' attitudes to co-vary with either their previous GCSE grades or their home backgounds.

Perceived learning activities (PLA)

Given the numbers involved in even the ALIS sub-set, the picture of teaching and learning activities was necessarily derived from students' perceptions rather than from observation. They were each asked to use the following six-point scale in estimating the frequency with which various listed activities were employed by their teachers:

- 1 represents 'never or almost never'
- 2 represents 'about once a term'
- 3 represents 'about once a month'
- 4 represents 'about once a fortnight'
- 5 represents 'about once or twice a week'
- 6 represents 'about every lesson'.

Results were aggregated to the level of syllabus group, which allowed a fruitful analysis syllabus-by-syllabus within each subject.

The 22 items on the PLA questionnaire were ones which previous ALIS studies had shown to be reliable. Listed here in slightly simplified form, they were approximately as follows:

1 Presentation by the teacher
2 Exercises (working examples)
3 Working questions from previous examinations (with help)
4 Working questions from previous examinations (fixed time; no help)
5 Preparing essays
6 Reading
7 Class discussion led by teacher
8 Discussion in groups
9 Having notes dictated
10 Making own notes from lessons
11 Using duplicated notes (handouts)
12 Practical work
13 Using audio or visual material
14 Making use of IT
15 Researching a topic (using a variety of reference material)
16 Working in pairs
17 Presenting work to the class
18 Listening to another student present work to the class
19 Giving help to another student
20 Receiving help from another student
21 Receiving individual help from teacher
22 Producing original work (experiments, poetry, designing, composing, criticism)

For the study as a whole, the main finding was that there were substantial differences between PLAs for the various subjects, but few (if any) such differences between syllabuses within subjects. Maths appeared to be dominated by teacher presentations, exercises, dictated notes and working previous examination questions. English, by contrast but not so surprisingly, was more characterised by class discussion, making own notes and reading. If there is evidence here of certain different subject-teaching cultures, what does the FL/French one look like?

French is in fact quite remarkable for its similarities across Boards and syllabuses; the study found no significant differences at all. Its culture, if that is what it is, looks very stable. (A subsequent follow-up, comparing the 1993 and 1994 results, shows little variation over time either.) PLA items figuring large in students' perceptions of their French lessons include:

- Teacher presentation
- Exercises
- Reading
- Discussion (particularly teacher-led)
- Making own notes
- Using handouts
- Using audio and visual materials
- Working in pairs

On the other hand, French students perceived very little use of IT or 'practical work'. Next-least used was dictation of notes – a strategy which, one suspects, lends itself even less well to the new-style A Level in FLs than used to be the case. The middle-ranking group of PLAs included:

- Re-working examination questions (and more with help than without)
- The giving and receiving of help and presentations (17 – 20 above, though this item did show variation, with WJEC in their small numbers showing the way!) and perhaps more surprisingly also . . .
- Individual teacher help.

Caution in interpreting syllabuses with small numbers has already been urged; yet the WJEC sample is quite distinct in the extent to which these students report working in pairs and using audio and visual material. NISEAC also shows some variation; reading, using handouts and pairs work, for instance, all feature at a somewhat higher level than is the norm. For most other Boards in the sample AEB, NEAB, OCSEB, ULES, UODLE) consistency is the by-word.

The single case of ULEAC is slightly the exception, however. In 1993 it offered three syllabuses: its 'A'–9190, its 'B'–9191 and 9804 which is now discontinued. Of these, it is the SGs taking the B/9191 whose perceptions diverge more than any other, from both the other two ULEAC syllabuses and the national norm. These students report relatively higher levels of re-working exam-papers, preparing essays, teacher-led discussion, making own notes, using handouts, using IT, researching a topic, listening to other students, receiving individual help and producing original work. It is quite tempting in fact to interpret this particular configuration of PLAs as rather specially 'liberal' or forward-looking, but it is hard to see obvious underlying factors in the syllabus itself.

Like the A Syllabus, the B offers a 20% option on course-work (against texts or topics in A, and just topics in B); both have a listening comprehension paper, and both give 20% to the oral test. A main difference lies in the addition of translation into English for Syllabus B. (In A, translation into French and reading comprehension together account for 20%; in B, translations either way plus reading comprehension account for 30%.) These are hardly differences, however, on which to base any expectation of marked differences in teaching strategies, let alone of the kind of PLAs found here. Information on the extent to which the B Syllabus Group opted for course-work (or not) is simply not available; and anyway such further sub-divisions of what is already a sub-set (French) of a sub-set (ALIS) leaves one with insufficient numbers to even speculate productively. Effects may once again reflect entry-patterns or other unknown variables.

Conclusion

In the terms of the ALIS study, A Level French thus offers a very consistent picture; and more so than for most other subjects. Achievement is relatively buoyant. Grade-variations relate slightly to prior achievement and gender, but not to Boards or syllabuses. Attitudes give no cause for alarm; they are particularly positive in the case of the girls. Analysis of the PLAs reported suggest the subject does have its own distinctive teaching culture, which may be different from that of other subjects but which remains remarkably consistent across the Boards as well as across nearly all the syllabuses. It could be, as the Executive Summary of the ALIS Report concludes, that 'teachers are inherently conservative in their approach' (p. 15). Perhaps teachers of French, like other subject groups, simply stay the way they (and their subject-colleagues) are. 'Vive la solidarité!', as the French teachers might put it.

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A new look at some old friends: *truc, quand même and justement*

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Introduction

Words evolve, as do living creatures, though rather faster. Instead of a process of natural selection for the most successful species or members of a species, the evolution of words depends on the extraordinary fertility and imagination of the human mind, together with the general acceptance of those changes by society. Sometimes the changes that result are ephemeral; at other times more long-lasting. Three terms that seem always to have existed in the French language are *truc, quand même* and *justement*. However, the use that is made of them has altered substantially. Not only will at least one of them be heard in almost every other sentence today, but it has been noticed by the writer that although advanced learners are not ignorant of their existence, they tend to eschew their use in conversation. This may partly be because there is no one specific translation for each, and partly because the user is trying to avoid their use in case he or she gets it wrong. Their versatility will baffle any simple attempt at 'demystifying' them, but it is hoped that a fresh examination may lead to their better understanding and more frequent use.

i) *Truc*

It is very tempting to restrict the use of *truc* to the sense of *machin*, or purely as an synonym for *chose* or *quelque chose*:

'Je fais un **truc** *sur l'industrie britannique'*.

Its abilities, however, are far wider. The Oxford Hachette (1993:836) organises the noun into five categories, approximating to; *knack, thingummy, thing, trick* and *what's his name*. The Robert *Dictionnaire des Synonynes* offers dozens of possibilities; naturally *thing* can represent almost anything. However, there are areas in which *truc* can be used where *thing* is not the correct translation.

Consider the following example, where a listener to France Inter had 'won' a holiday to the Antilles for two, but then had noticed the small print:

'Alors, bon, avant de préparer les maillots de bain **quand même** *il y a un* **truc**, *hein. . ?'*

Le Nouveau Petit Robert (1993:2325) describes the following categories:

a) Façon d'agir qui requiert de l'habilité . . . (as in the example above.)
b) Moyen concret.
c) Chose quelconque
d) Domaine, spécialité.

The following examples taken from current speech include one example from the stage act of Coluche:

Sense 1. A specific object, such as (here) a shop:

'On peut aller faire des courses au **truc** *à Winchester'*.

or (here) a type of costume: *'On pourrait porter les grands* **trucs** *de médecins, comme dans Molière'*. (This meaning can be contrasted with Grand Larousse (1993:935): 'CIN. and THEAT. (special) effect, trick'.)

or (here) people and places: *'Le milieu autorisé, c'est un* **truc**, *c'est un endroit autorisé ou il y a plein de mecs qui . . .*

(Coluche).

or (here) a line in a play : *'. . . je monte, je dis un* **truc** *et je fais une pause.'*

or replacing 'it': *'La plupart des **trucs** elle peut les faire elle-même.'*

Sense 2. 'Things like that'. e.g. *'Avec les cours et les **trucs**, j'ai pas le temps'*

Sense 3. Something important, e.g. *'Il a découvert un **truc**, comme Curie par exemple'*

Sense 4. Part of a whole, e.g. *'Sur le plan syndical, il y a un **truc** qui est mal fait'*.

Sense 5. A solution to a problem, e.g. *'J'ai des problèmes avec la batterie de ma voiture. Vous avez peut-être un **truc**?'* e.g. *'Les **trucs**, les astuces'*.

Sense 7. Someone's name e.g. *'Hier j'ai vu **truc** . . . comment s'appelle-t-il . . .?*

ii) *Quand même*

Grévisse (1993:1471) quotes:

'Pour **quand même** [tiré de la locution conjonctive de subordination] l'Acad. ne fait aucune réserve. Elle ne signale pas que quand *même*, comme d'ailleurs *tout de même*, peuvent avoir un sens adversatif fort atténué et signifier 'il faut l'avouer, à vrai dire'.

Such an example would be:

e.g. *'Même s'ils s'amusent, ils travaillent **quand même**'*.

Hachette (p. 661) and Larousse (p. 735) list examples under such categories as **even though**, **still** and **all the same**. It is, however, much more versatile, and I have listed 12 different uses, some subtly and others substantially different from each other:

Sense 1. 'Basically' e.g. *'Alors, vous pouvez **quand même** le mélanger avec vingt mille choses'*.

Sense 2. 'Indeed' e.g. *'Oui, c'est bon, **quand même**.'* e.g. *'Oui , le PDC a toujours dit **quand même** que . . .'*

Sense 3. 'However' e.g. *'Je dois **quand même** vous dire que . . .'*
e.g. *'C'est **quand même** pas mal pensé.'*
e.g. *'Je me demande **quand méme** si . . .'*

A subtle difference from 'however' is 'on the other hand', when for example a number of negative points about (here) a profession has been listed, but one then wishes to introduce a positive aspect:

Sense 4. 'On the other hand' (or perhaps 'Really') e.g. *'Ce qui est remarquable dans la profession **quand méme**, c'est le fait que . . .'*

Sense 5. 'After all' e.g. *'Vous avez entendu? Vous êtes **quand même** content d'accepter son avis?'*

Sense 6. 'After all' and 'Really' in combination e.g. *'Il faut savoir **quand méme** que c'est pas donné un ordre d'éléphants blancs; ça vaut **quand même** un peu d'argent.'*

Sense 7. 'Nevertheless' e.g. *'C'est **quand même** très désagréable'*.

Sense 8. 'Already' e.g. *'Rien n'a été décidé sauf la déclaration adoptée **quand même** il y a quelques semaines.'*

Sense 9. As a tag, to emphasise a strong assertion: e.g. *'Est-ce que vous savez qui je suis? Je suis le patron. **Quand même**, hein?'*

Sense 11. To invite an answer e.g. *'On fait un joli voyage, hein, **quand même**?'*

Sense 12. With **pas**, becomes 'hardly' e.g. *'Vous n'imaginez **quand méme** pas que vous . . .'*

iii) *Justement*

The most widely accepted use of **justement** occurs in the sense of either i) 'à l'instant';

*'Je parlais **justement** de toi'* (Hachette: 454)
or ii) 'avec justesse'

*'. . . comme l'a fort **justement** souligné Nina.*
(ibid.)

It is, however, also versatile, and can represent **'really'** (as can '**quand même**' as we have seen), **'as it happens'**, **'to be exact'**,and **'precisely/just so/quite'**, as well as having the required negative effect when used with **pas**: which the following examples demonstrate:

Sense 1. 'To be exact' e.g. *'**Justement**, ce serait mieux de dire 'quand même' au lieu de 'tout de même.'*

Sense 2. 'Exactly/precisely/quite' e.g. *'Tu ne m'aimes plus?' '**Justement**.'*

e.g. *'Tu ne vas pas m'accompagner à la fête?' '**Justement pas**'.*

Sense 3. 'As it happens' e.g. *'**Justement**, il vient de parler de toi.'*

Sense 4. 'Really' e.g. *'**Justement**, is faut qu'elle reste silencieuse pendant un certain temps'*

Conclusion

All of the examples quoted in this article, except where acknowledged, are taken from natural speech heard either from Erasmus students at the University of Southampton, or from French radio, in the early months of 1995. The interpretations, however, are personal, and may remind us of how elusive a reasonable equivalent to these flamboyant and versatile paradigms can be. Readers may hold different views from those of the author, of the most exquisite renderings of the phrases used, and he would be very happy to receive any comments.

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Une Femme Professeur, Une Professeur(e) or Une Prof?

Howard Evans University of Leeds

The feminisation of the grammatical forms used for members of the professions and holders of public office has for some years caused difficulty for grammarians and, more generally, for users of the French language. In the December 1985 issue of *Modern Languages,*[1] I reviewed the then current position, choosing as my corpus not media usage but the titles adopted by *candidates* on the *bulletins de vote* for the June 1984 European elections; in this way it was possible to analyse the candidates' own preferences rather than the editorial policy of a particular newspaper or magazine or the choices of individual journalists. The article confirmed some generally recognised principles and put forward several provisional hypotheses: firstly, that feminisation is readily accepted for the numerous less prestigious activities traditionally accessible to or predominantly carried out by females (*une vendeuse, une coiffeuse, une secrétaire, une institutrice* etc.) but less so – at least in accepted usage in Metropolitan France – in professions in which gender discrimination has been only more recently diminished (*ingénieur, docteur,* and even *professeur,* in spite of the fact that the latter profession is becoming predominently female); secondly, that both forms can co-exist where society perceives a difference of status (*une directrice d'école* but *Madame le Directeur du Budget au Ministère des Finances*); thirdly, not surprisingly, that newly feminised forms are more generally accepted by the political Left than by the political Right; and fourthly that resistance to change often comes from women themselves.

A Still-Born Reform

At the time the article went to press, a *Commission de terminologie relative au vocabulaire concernant des activités des femmes,* set up by Yvette Roudy, *le* (*la*) *ministre délégué*(*e*) *auprès du Premier ministre chargé*(*e*) *des droits de la femme* in the Laurent Fabius Socialist Government, chaired by *l'écrivain*(*e*) Benoîte Groult was completing its deliberations. In a second article[2] I discussed the Commission's report and the subsequent events at Government level culminating in the publication in the *Journal Officiel* on the day the Socialists were to lose power in March 1986 of a watered-down *'circulaire'*, less binding than the *'arrêté'* proposed by Madame Groult and in which the Prime Minister asked his Ministerial colleagues to ensure that certain rules were applied in all official documents and in text books used in educational establishments under State control.[3] The rules appended to the circular stipulate: (1) the use of the feminine determinante (*une, la, cette*); (2) the adding of a mute 'e' to masculine nouns ending in a vowel other than a mute 'e' (*une chargée de mission*); (3) for masculine nouns ending in a consonant, either use of an identical form in the masculine and feminine (*une médecin*) or the adding of a mute 'e' (*une avocate, une agente, une mécanicienne*); (4) for masculine nouns ending in 'eur' (which create particular problems), three cases are mentioned: -euse (*une danseuse*, etc.), -rice (*une actrice*, etc.) or, where the root verb is not recognisable, the use of an identical form in the masculine and feminine (*une auteur, une proviseur, une ingénieur, une professeur*).

The Groult report contains a contradiction being to a large degree prescriptive and at the same time affirming the principle – frequently ignored by French linguistic legislators (including more recently Jacques Toubon) – that *'une langue ne se* *fabrique pas en laboratoire: elle se vit et se crée dans le quotidien'*, and that it is up to the general public *'aux intéressées, surtout, de trancher en dernier ressort, comme cela s'est fait à toutes les périodes de notre histoire'*.[4] It seems certain that the Right-Wing Administration that came to power in March 1986 attached less importance to this aspect of linguistic change than its predecessor and it might also be argued that in the late eighties militant feminism in France declined, or at least changed its objectives. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that there exists in France, not only in official circles but in the general public at large including among women, a high degree of resistance to the Groult proposals.

Is this to say that in the decade that has ensued there has been no change? The European elections of June 1994 provided the opportunity to review the current situation by comparing two similar corpuses of *bulletins de vote* at a ten-year interval: those used by French electors in June 1984 and which served as the basis for my 1985 article and those used in June 1994.

It should, however, be noted at the outset that the recent editions of the standard widely-used dictionaries show either a marked conservatism, going no further in some cases than mentioning the 'official' form alongside the accepted form, or a discrete silence. Both the Petit Larousse and the Dictionnaire Hachette Encyclopédique Illustré give *cadre, docteur, chef, ingénieur, juge, maire, ministre, professeur* as masculine nouns, (rightly) condemning *doctoresse* and *mairesse* as familiar or obsolete, and giving *prof* as familiar. Hachette condemns *une députée* whereas Larousse notes prudently *'on rencontre au féminin députée'*. As for *président/présidente,* Larousse notes diplomatically: *'l'usage reste muet quant au genre pour désigner une femme remplissant l'une des fonctions. On dira volontiers la présidente en parlant d'elle mais l'appellation formelle reste en principe Madame le Président'*.

The media and feminisation

On French radio increasing if limited use of the feminine determinant has been noted (*une ministre, une secrétaire d'état, une juge*), both at the request of the person being interviewed and more generally. It is probably too soon to draw from these examples any conclusions about future trends.

As for the printed media Elizabeth Close's excellent 1993 article *La Presse et les Femmes* based on an exhaustive study of *Le Nouvel Observateur, Marie Claire* and *Le Canard Enchaîné*, together with examples drawn from other newspapers and periodicals, indicates that there is still considerable uncertainty in French usage and this is confirmed by my own (less systematic) reading, especially of *Le Monde*. However, care should always be taken not to take as evidence of growing general usage an instance where a particular stylistic effect is sought. For example, *L'Express* of 18 August 1994 gave as the title of an article on women's erotic writing: *'Quand les écrivaines couchent leurs fantasmes sur le papier'*. Or again *Libération* of 23/24 July 1994 reported an unusual case of sexual harassment at work under the title *'Une chef accusée de harceler ses hommes: Employés d'une société de Valenciennes, le père et le fils se plaignaient des avances d'une cadre'*. (The article itself uses *un chef de service féminin* and *un cadre féminin* but also *une avocate*). At most I would argue that in headlines the use of these forms, which are still unusual in French, serves provocatively to attract the reader's attention. At a less sensational level Péal in his controversial book on Mitterrand's early years, *Une Jeunesse française*, uses *cette jeune professeur*. *Le Monde* does not seem to have an established policy, surprisingly in view of the fact that it has been said that there is nothing its reporters fear more than to find on their desks a note saying 'Ring Colignon', the paper's chief copy editor, language columnist and author of a recent book on the current state of the French language.[5] I have, however, noted *ministre déléguée chargée de la santé* (5.4.95) and *des plaintes déposées par une juge stagiaire et une greffière pour harcèlement sexuel* (13.4.95), the latter in spite of the fact that it is in the legal profession that there is greatest resistance to change in the use of feminised forms. Other terms creating difficulties will be considered below in the context of the European election *bulletins de vote* but it should be noted that it is not unusual to find the two forms in the same issue or even on the same page of the paper, sometimes referring to the same person: *adjointe au maire chargée des affaires sociales/adjoint au maire chargée de l'enseignement* (18/19.9.94); *secrétaire général de l'AUDECAM/ secrétaire générale de l'AUDECAM* (6.9.94); *directeur de recherches au CNRS/directrice de recherches au CNRS* (10.8.95). It is frequent to find a feminised form alongside a non-feminised form (*Madame* X, *inspecteur des impôts, conseillère régionale*). On occasions linguistic pragmatism seems to prevail, as in an obituary on 2688.95: *'Irène de Lipkowski, ancien député, est décédée le 16 août. Née le 3 décembre 1898[ ], elle fut députée RPF de la Seine de 1951 à 1956.'*

The current confusion may be seen from the following biographical information given in *Le Monde* on 31.3.1995: *'Paule Dayen, magistrat, a été nommée conseiller d'Etat au tour extérieur. D'abord avocate à la cour d'appel de Paris, elle devient chargée de mission et puis le Président de la République la nomme secrétaire générale du Conseil supérieur de la magistrature. Elle devient conseiller technique au cabinet du garde des sceaux puis en septembre 1994 directrice adjointe de ce meme cabinet'*.

The bulletins de vote

The French have adopted for the European elections the system of proportional representation with national lists. Each list comprises 87 candidates (the number of seats held by France in the European Parliament). On the lists appear for each candidate their trade or profession and the elective positions they hold or have held. I have analysed eleven lists covering the whole range of the political spectrum, from Arlette Laguiller's Extreme Left *Lutte ouvrière* to Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front *Allez la France*, together with the two lists presented by ecologists, the radical *Union des Ecologistes pour l'Europe* and Brice Lalonde's reformist *Les Vrais Ecologistes*. With increased female presence on many lists (and in a couple of cases parity with male representation) the *bulletins de vote* provide a substantial corpus of current usage, based – it may safely be assumed – on the preference of the *intéressées*.

At the outset several general observations can be made. Firstly, the only list to have in any significant way applied the rules laid down in the March 1986 circular was that of the *Union des Ecologistes pour l'Europe* (UEE) with *députée* (5 times), *présidente* (6 times), *ingénieure* (3 times), *ancienne membre* (4 times), *avocate, chercheuse*, together with frequent use of *conseillère municipale/générale/régionale*, the latter – as will be seen below – widely adopted by candidates on many lists; however, there is also a *professeur agrégé* (rather than the not unusual *professeur agrégée*) and two *adjoints au maire*. However, this list shows a clear feminist stance in the use in particular of *députée, ingénieure, ancienne membre, chercheuse* and to a lesser extent *avocate*, forms that are not attested by any other list. Secondly, the (linguistic) conservatism of Michel Rocard's Socialist *Europe Solidaire* (ES) list, not only in respect of *député* and *avocat* (whose feminine forms are still relatively rare), but also throughout of *président* and *conseiller* (whose feminised forms are – as we shall see – frequently encountered in other lists). It is not possible to suggest a reason for this, although there were Socialist reservations about the Groult report and in early 1994 it was reported that Yvette Roudy had not been offered a high enough place on the list to have given her a chance of being elected (finally she did not stand)[6]. Given the socio-professional composition of the *Lutte ouvrière* (LO) list generally accepted feminised forms are not surprisingly used throughout; however, *agent* is used and this, with evidence from other lists, indicates that there is a particular linguistic difficulty in adopting *agente*..

Taking all the lists together, in comparison with the 1984 *bulletins de vote*, significant trends can be noted. There has been no progress in the adoption of *députée* and *sénatrice*. On the other hand, with the one exception of the Socialist list, *présidente* and *vice-présidente* are generally used and may be considered as accepted forms. The use in all cases of *maire adjoint* confirms that the masculine form (*le maire*) is still the standard form, perhaps on account of the existance the homophone *la mère*. There is considerable disagreement in respect of *adjoint(e) au maire*, with 12 feminised forms and 7 non-feminised forms. The use of *secrétaire* as a feminine has for many years been standard for females working in a clerical capacity (*une secrétaire médicale*) but there is still disagreement over usage for a female working in a senior administrative capacity in an organisation (*secrétaire général(e)*) and on the National Front list there is one masculine and one feminine form. *Conseiller(ère)* causes particular problems both in the general sense and in the context of local and regional government: *une conseillère d'orientation* stood for election as did *une femme conseiller pédagogique*; a large number of female local and regional councillors stood for election to the European Parliament and the division between the masculine and the feminine forms, with the exception already noted of the Socialist list, broadly follows political lines – with the Communist, the Chevènement dissident Socialist and both Ecologist lists adopting the feminised forms, the de Villiers Right-Wing anti-Maastricht list, Le Pen's National Front list and a significant majority (but by no means all) of the Baudis Neo-Gaullist/Liberal list using the non-feminised forms.

From the evidence of the lists, the French language seem to have no difficulty with nouns derived from adjectives: *attachée* (*commerciale, territoriale, administrative*), *chargée* (*de communication, de mission, de relations publiques, d'étude*), *agrégée* (*de biologie, de lettres*); however, on the De Villiers list are three female *responsables associatifs*, directors of voluntary organisations. *Cadre* is feminised only once out of four (*cadre commerciale*) – on the Lalonde Ecology list – and on the Bernard Tapie list *fonctionnaire* is feminised once and remains in its 'masculine' form once (*fonctionnaire territorial(e)*; *demandeur d'emploi* is used uniformly for an unemployed female. *Directrice* is used on four lists but on the Rocard list we find a female *directeur de cabinet de collectivité locale*. *Consultante* (*d'entreprise, en ergonomie*) is noted on two lists but on one of these is also a female *dirigeant d'entreprise*.

From the evidence of the *bulletins de vote* there is still clearly not only confusion in France on feminisation of names of professions and of elected positions, to which might be added decorations (*Chevalier, Officier des Palmes Académiques*), but also considerable reluctance to change and even since 1984 a degree of regression. In some cases grammatical considerations intervene, as illustrated on one of the lists by a *candidate* who was *le plus jeune conseiller général de France*; the meaning would not have been the same had the feminised form been used!

A Franco-Belgian controversy

But what is happening in other Francophone countries? As was noted in my first article, French Canadians have for some years readily adopted feminised forms (*une ingénieure*, etc). As for the French-speaking Community in Belgium an incident was reported in *Le Monde* early in 1994.[7] The Minister of Culture of the French Community in Belgium signed a decree stipulating that in future the Belgian administration should use the feminised forms of 1,500 names of professional activities, functions, titles and ranks (including *pompière, cafetière, mineuse, matelote* and *entraîneuse* (for the female trainer of a sports team). The decree elicited an immediate hostile response from Maurice Druon, *secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie française*, a response that contradicted the recommendations of the March 1986 Government circular. One can sympathise with the many Belgians who saw Druon's intervention as an example of linguistic imperialism. For the Belgian Minister, echoing the ideas put forward in Madame Groult's report,

> Le décret répond à l'évolution de notre société, où les femmes occupent de plus en plus le terrain professionnel et permet de promouvoir l'égalité entre hommes et femmes. En effet, l'usage qui consiste à désigner des femmes par un terme masculin leur impose des dénominations qui nient une part importante de leur identité.

For M. Druon

> L'Académie française considère que cette féminisation est abusive et choquante (. . .) Le genre dit 'masculin' est un genre dit 'non marqué', qui a la capacité de représenter à lui seul les éléments relevant de l'un ou l'autre genre (. . .) A l'inverse, le genre 'féminin' est un genre marqué. Il institue entre les êtres animés une ségrégation, de sorte que son emploi devrait être soigneusement évité par ceux et celles mêmes qui prétendent vouloir abolir toute inégalité professionnelle entre les sexes.

Conclusion

The debate therefore remains open, but where does that leave us as practising teachers of French as a foreign language?

We should, I think, firstly ignore the rules laid down in the March 1986 Fabius circular as being excessively radical and recognise that the use of certain feminised forms signifies on the part of the user a clear ideological stance. Secondly, we should accept that in the last resort it is usage that prevails over linguistic interventionism and adopt the forms used by a majority of native speakers of French even if these forms are condemned by *l'Académie française*.

Footnotes

1. Howard Evans, A feminine issue in contemporary French usage, *Modern Languages*, Vol lxvi, N. 4, December 1985, pp. 231–236.
2. Howard Evans, The Government and Linguistic Change in France: the Case of Feminisation, *Modern and Contemporary France*, N. 31, October 1987, pp. 22–26. The problem has also been studied in two subsequently published major articles: (1) Danielle Trudeau, Changement social et changement linguistique: la question du féminin, *The French Review*, Vol 62, N. 1, October 1988, pp. 77–87, and (2) Elizabeth Close, La Presse et les Femmes: Madame le Directeur ou Madame la Directrice, *Australian Journal of French Studies*, Vol XXX, N. 1, January–April 1993, pp. 116–141. Among recent works, see Dennis Ager, *Sociolinguistics and Contemporary French*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 118–121, and Marie-Marthe Gervais, Gender and Language in French, in Carol Sanders (ed), *French Today: Language in its Social Context*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 121–138. The above works include detailed bibliographies which are not reproduced here.
3. The text of the *circulaire* has been republished in *Le Dictionnaire des termes officiels de la langue française, Journal Officiel de la Républiaue française*, 1994, pp. 323–324.
4. Roneoed text, p. 4.
5. Bertrand Poirot-Delpech in his Preface to Colignon, J. P, *La Cote des Mots*, Paris *Le Monde Editions*, 1994.
6. *Le Monde* 1.4.94.
7. 'Querelle franco-belge' in *Le Monde*, 25.2.94.

Calling all teachers of French or Dutch

LINGUA is planning to run two week seminars from 25 March - 5 April 1996. Participants are expected to contribute around £120 to their travel and living expenses.

For further details contact: Simon Sweeney, Head of International Language and Short Course Unit, University College of Ripon and York St John, Lord Mayor's Walk, York Y03 7EX
Tel: 01904 616684

News and Notes

The Camargo Foundation

The Camargo Foundation, and educational trust established under the laws of the State of New York, maintains a center of studies in France for the benefit of scholars, artists and writers who wish to pursue projects related to French and francophone cultures. The Foundation offers, at no cost, eleven furnished apartments and a reference library in the city of Cassis. Application deadline is 1 March for the following academic year. For further details write for the Bulletin to The Camargo Foundation, Ricardo Bloch, West 1050 First National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota Street, Saint Paul, MN 55101–1312.

Colloque, Université de Franche-Comté, Cresles

Télécode, L'enfant, la télévision et l'école, jeudi 30 et vendredi 31 mai 1996 at the Atria-Novotel, Belfort. Cost 1000 FF (includes accommodation and meals). 500 FF to be paid on registration. For details write to CRESLEF/Télécole, faculté des lettres, 30 rue Mégevand, 25030 Besançon CEDEX. Telephone 00 33 81 66 54 10.

Philatélie

A useful catalogue of recent stamp issues is available – Catalogue des Timbres-Poste et des Produits Philatéliques en vente – 3ème Trimestre. Write to: Le Service Philatélique de la Poste, 18, rue François Bonvin, F-75758 PARIS CEDEX 15.

Franco-British Council: School Partnership Prize

A prize of £5000 will be awarded to a school for children between 11 and 16 years of age to carry out an environmental project with a partner school in France. This could relate to recycling, local conservation, pollution, waste disposal or any other environmental subject. The emphasis should be on practical work on a local level comparing the experiences of the two countries. Schools are invited to write to the Franco-British Council for an application form which has to be submitted *no later than 20 February 1996*. It is anticipated that a prize will be awarded in May 1996. The winning school will have to complete and report on their work within a one year time scale based on the academic year September 1996 to July 1997. For details and application form write to: Ann Kenrick, Franco-British Council 11 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QB, (FAX: 0171 976 8131).

Readers may like to note that the Franco-British Council was created over 20 years ago on the initiative of President Georges Pompidou and Prime Minister Edward Heath. It exists to promote better understanding between Britain and France through a programme of meetings and reports, with contributions from leading representatives of the worlds of culture, science, the arts, education, politics and business.

Guide de la Radio Edition 1995

Ever tried to find *Radio Nostalgie* or *France Musique* in a part of France you don't know? What you need is the useful pocket sized book, published by Michelin, available for 30 FF in Maisons de la Presse throughout France. In 242 pages it lists all radio wavelengths receivable in France, city by city. In addition to hundreds of FM stations there are, of course, details of Long Wave stations, motorway stations and cable and satellite stations.

Le Hameau du Vin

French wine buffs and those who only drink wine without needing to talk about it will all appreciate a visit to Le Hameau du Vin in Romanèche-Thorins. This Centre opened in June 1993 for groups, schools or individuals. Located between the Beaujolais and the Mâconnais and close to the major roads it is now attracting many who wish to extend their knowledge of wine. It has been set up by Georges Duboeuf Wines who have bought the local railway station at Romanèche-Thorins. Georges Duboeuf writes 'Accueilli dans une am-biance de gare du XIXème siècle le visiteur se laissera transporter tout au long de son cheminement à travers les différentes salles où règnent à la fois un esprit de découverte, une ambiance de spectacle et une sensation de sérénité, liés au monde viti-vinicole. Pendant une heure et demie d'apprentissage les visiteurs suivent le sillon de la route des vins du Beaujolais et due Mâconnais. La visite s'achève par la dégustation d'une des appellations du Beaujolais ou du Mâconnais, dans une salle conviviale où règnent l'esprit du vin et de ses hommes.' Entry to the museum is 70 FF. As the Michelin Guide would say 'Mérite un détour'.

Francophonie: Analysis of Contents over 12 issues

From time to time discussion rightly takes place about the nature and content of the Association's journals. Since issue No. 12 of *Francophonie* (Dec. 1995) marks the end of this Editor's period of Editorship readers may find it helpful in discussion to note the distribution of articles which have appeared in *Francophonie* since its beginning in June 1990.

	Pedagogy	Language	Lit	Institutions	Total
1.	6	1	1	1	9
2.	3		1	2	6
3.	1		2	4	7
4.	5	1	3	1	10
5.	4	1	2		7
6.	3	1		3	7
7.	4	1	2	2	9
8.	3	1	1	3	8
9.	3		2	1	6
10.	3	1	3	2	9
11.	4	2	1	2	9
12.	2	2	2	1	7

TOTAL NUMBER OF ARTICLES OVER 12 ISSUES: 94 of which 41 have been classroom based i.e. providing help or guidance or describing practical developments undertaken by the writer.

TOTAL NUMBER OF REVIEWS: 208 individual book reviews each presented by an experienced teach of French. Total number of pages of reviews over 12 issues: 125. Some 50 different reviewers have contributed to the Reviews Section in which all new major courses have had extensive coverage. This Section is aimed directly at the classroom teacher.

Le Hameau du Vin in Romanèche-Thorins

Books and Materials received

The following books and materials have been received from the publishers. Titles marked * are available for review by telephoning 0113 267 9258 after 6 p.m.

*** The Oxford Paperback French Dictionary and Grammar.** *OUP 1995. ISBN 0 19 864529 5. £6.99.*
A handy reference book, designed for tourists, students and business people.

*** Larousse Mini French Dictionary.** *Larousse 1995. ISBN 2 03 430903 0. £2.99.*

*** Larousse School French Dictionary.** *Larousse 1995. ISBN 2 03 430650 3. £5.50.*

*** Larousse French Grammar.** *Larousse 1995. ISBN 2 03 430980 4. £3.99.*
A study and revision aid for GSCE and A Level alike.

*** Je ne sais quoi**. Yannick Schneider. *Minerva Press. 1994. ISBN 1 85863 166 1. £7.99.*
Verse in a variety of languages and poetic disciplines.

*** Proust: à l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs.** Leighton Hodson. *Glasgow Introductory Guides to French Literature. 1994. ISBN 0 85261 444 6. £3.95.*

*** Hugo: Notre-Dame de Paris.** Rachel Killick. *Glasgow Introductory Guides to French Literature. 1994. ISBN 0 85261 395 4. £3.95.*

*** Modern French Short Fiction.** Edited by Johnnie Gratton and Brigitte le Juez. *Manchester University Press. 1994. ISBN 0 7190 4210 0 hardback £29.99. (ISBN 0 7190 4211 9 Paperback £7.99).*
Fifteen writers are featured in this new anthology of French short stories, including Mérimée, Balzac, Colette, Duras, Boulanger, etc. There is also a substantial introduction and each story has its own preface and notes. Readership: A Level students and first and second year undergraduates.

*** French Tots.** Teresa Scibor. *Living and Learning (Cambridge) 1995. ISBN 5 012902 100660. No price given.*
First French words through songs and games. The pack contains a 60 minute cassette, 4 picture boards, 24 game pieces and notes for parents with key words and song lyrics in French and English.

*** Raconte et Chante: Les Animaux de la Ferme.** *European Language Institute. Teacher's book ISBN 88 85148 64 6, pupil's book ISBN 88 85148 64 6 and cassette. Price for all components £12.95 + VAT.*
For very young learners. Available in this country from European Schoolbooks, The Runnings, Cheltenham.

*** Collection 'Lecture Facile'. Hachette.**
Le Cinema Français Aujourd' Hui. *ISBN 9 782010 206269. £3.75.*
Albert Camus. *ISBN 9 782011 550026. £3.75.*
Alain Prost. *ISBN 9 782011 549907. £3.60.*
L'Auvergne. *ISBN 9 782011 550194. £3.60.*
La Provence. *ISBN 9 782011 550033. £3.60.*
From European Schoolbooks.

*** Le Spectre du Père-Lachaise.** Laurent Rullier. *Clé International. From 'Version Originale: Lire le Français.' ISBN 9 782190 319582. £2.70.*
For those with 2 years' study of French. From European Schoolbooks.

* **Oral/Ecrit: Entraînez-vous.** Jacqueline Jacquet et Michèle Pendanx. *Clé International. ISBN 9 782090 333367. £6.55.* Niveau intemédiaire. Une étude contrastive des spécificités de l'oral et de l'écrit à travers des thèmes communs. From European Schoolbooks.

* **Exerçons-nous: Vocabulaire Illustré.** Peter Watcyn-Jones and Francis Prouillac. *Hatchette. ISBN 9 782011 549914 £8.95.* From European Schoolbooks.

* **Bis: Le Français en s'amusant.** *European Language Institute. £5.95.*
120 cartes pour jouer de différentes façons et apprendre en s'amusant les mots de base. From European Schoolbooks.

* **Jeux Faciles en Français Volume 2.** *European Language Institute. ISBN 88 85148 95 6. £4.25.*
S'addresse à des jeunes qui ont une première connaissance de la langue. From European Schoolbooks.

* **Flip Posters Plus.** *Posters £35.00 + VAT. Guide du professeur ISBN 88 8148 007 7. £8.95. Cahier d Activités ISBN 88 8148 012 3. £7.95.*
Une nouvelle série originale de 20 posters, décrivant des situations de vie quotidienne. Apprendre le français avec facilité en s'amusant. From European Schoolbooks.

* **French Business Dictionary.** Editorial team: P. H. Collin, Françoise Laurendeau, Nicole Marin, Jacqueline Blériot, Stephen Curtis and Flavie Vassor. *Peter Collin Publishing 1995. ISBN 0 948549 64 5. £25.00.* This is the second edition of the dictionary (first published in 1990) and has been completely up-dated and revised.

* **Le Franglais: Forbidden English Forbidden American: Law, Politics and Language in Contemporary France.** Philip Thody. *Athlone 1995. ISBN 0 485 11476 3 (hb) £32.00. ISBN 0 485 12115 8 (pb) £14.95.*

* **Avantage Evaluation Pack 4 (rouge).** Rosi McNab and David Crossland. *Heinemann. 1955. ISBN 0 435 37443 1. £79.50.*

* **Avantage Evaluation Pack 4 (vert).** Rosi McNab and David Crossland. *Heinemann. 1955. ISBN 0 435 37443 5. £79.50.*

* **Lire Davantage Evaluation Pack C.** *Heinemann. 1955. ISBN 0 435 37005 7. £9.95.*

Kiyeko and The Lost Night. *Ubisoft. From the Digitales Series of Interactive storybooks. PC CD Rom. £34.99.*
While not specifically for learning French, there are a number of features interesting for a language teacher. For ages 4–9.

GCSE Questions and Answers in French. Steven Crossland. *Letts. 1995. ISBN 1 85758 323 X. £7.95.*
Book and cassette. A broad selection of questions, some from past papers, with worked answers. Tips from the examiners and a revision summary.

Harrap's French Pocket Dictionary. New edition 1995. (First published 1988) *ISBN 0 245 60575 4. £6.99.*
Up-to-the-minute coverage of French and English.

The Concise Oxford Hachette French Dictionary. Edited by Marie-Hélène Corréard and Valerie Grundy. *OUP and Hachette. 1995. ISBN 0 19 864329 2. £14.99.* Compiled from large electronic text collections in both languages. General, scientific, literary and technical vocabulary. Over 50 pages of guidance on writing letters, job applications and CV's.

Esquisses Hexagonales. *Travaux dirigés.* David Jeffery. 1995. £12.00.
Language exercises designed to complement the books and videos of the same name, produced by the Associated Examining Board. (Reviewed in Francophonie, December 1994).

French Vocabulary Builder. Harriette Lanzer and Anna Lise Gordon. *OUP. 1995. ISBN 0 19 912207 5 £3.50.* A study aid for GCSE. All topics in the five areas are covered and presented in various levels of ability.

Reviews

Cadences 1. D. Berger, R Mérieux. *Hatier/Didier distributed in UK by European Schoolbooks Limited, The Runnings, Cheltenham, Glos. GL51 9PQ. Editions Didier, 1994, ISBN 2 278 04329 6. Méthode: £7.25 Guide Pédagogique: £6.25 Tapes: not sent for review.*

This method targets adults and adolescents who are complete beginners of French, and suggests that it be used as an intensive course of 100–120 hours. An alternative use suggested is a French course for university or for adult evening sessions. With these stated objectives, it is quite clear that the books would not replace one of the more usual course books for GCSE and A Level, but they would certainly provide plenty of complementary material.

The writers place great emphasis on the phonetic character of the language. From the first chapter we are introduced to the phonetic alphabet alongside the French abécédée. Comparison of French with other European languages is also a feature of this book. To this end, a glossary of 6 languages (including Greek) is included. Obviously, French beginners are not automatically assumed to be British.

Those amateurs of the target language will find this method invaluable as a resource since all exercises, examples etc. are in French. So too is the teacher's guide, but in fact, this is simply a full explanation of how the material is presented, together with a key to the exercises and some assessment material. The cassette tapes would appear to be essential to this course, given the importance attached to phonetics.

The material is divided into 4 sections: Arriving (in France); Observing life (including the town, the street and the people); Living – from day to day (this section touches on a historical perspective); finally a section on invitations/hobbies and pastimes/holidays.

Grammar is clearly explained throughout, with a summary at the end. A very useful addition is a transcript (in the student's copy) of all material used on cassette.

Opinions from colleagues were not wholly favourable. One thought that the whole work lacked colour, which it inevitably does since its editors have preferred to use black-and-white throughout. This was thought to be a de-motivating aspect of the book. While the multilingual glossary was seen to be innovative, some questioned the value of the Greek symbols. On the other hand, if French was seen as a language to be learned by someone whose mother tongue was not English, this glossary could indeed prove to be useful. Others felt that the whole book contained much useful information, but that it would be of much more assistance used alongside other course materials. The emphasis on phonetics was not seen to be particularly advantageous for the teenager, introducing as it does another element of learning to an already difficult language, but it was recognised that adults might well find it a logical approach to the language.

As a resource book for Modern Languages Faculties, this book may well prove its worth.

CLARE LEONARD
The Plume School, Essex

Dossiers France Télévision. Graham Bishop, Peter Dyson and Valerie Worth-Stylianou. *John Murray. Video cassette ISBN 0 7195 7107 3. £30. 00 + VAT. Student's Book ISBN 0 7195 7106 5. £9.99. Soundtrack cassette ISBN 0 7195 7109 X. £10. 00 + VAT.*

This is an exciting and impressive new

resource from the authors of the earlier, similar, *Actualités TV Presse*. It comprises a Student's book, a video and an audio cassette of the soundtrack of the video (not sent for review). The video lasts 70 minutes and treats 10 themes, with two video clips from France 2 News (each lasting around 2 minutes) on each theme. Each clip is preceded by an introduction to the news story by one of two presenters on screen (lasting just over a minute), consisting of background information. During this introduction, key names and vocabulary appear on screen (usefully, before the word is spoken). Each clip is also numbered on screen throughout.

The video and the accompanying student's book are designed to be user-friendly, and the result is a very comprehensive and accessible resource, although the only criticism is that the pages of the student's book are a trifle cluttered. The student's book contains pre- and post-comprehension questions, grammar exploitation exercises, a newspaper article to accompany each video clip, and practical projects largely devoted to oral work. The second clip in each theme has more complex exploitation. Transcripts are of course provided in a separate section, as well as a key, making it suitable for self study. It also contains an excellent 'Savoir-faire' section, which addresses the often neglected area of skill development. It contains copious hints and assignments for Dictionary work, note-taking, summarising, formal letter writing, discussion and presentation skills and telephone and business skills.

The range of themes covered by this resource provide a sound framework for an entire A or AS Level course and could well be used as the backbone for a thematic course. As the authors say, however, the course is also appropriate for vocational and business French courses, and certain sections of the 'Savoir-faire' section are obviously intended for this audience, though they are no less useful at A or AS Level. Video is a useful and increasingly important resource for intermediate or advanced students of French: it provides a variety of authentic voices and through news stories makes contemporary culture and life in France more immediate to the student. *Dossiers France Télévision* is a carefully compiled and exploited video resource, and can be thoroughly recommended.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts

Fréquence Jeunes. Méthode de Français. G. Capelle, M. Cavalli, N. Gidon. *Hachette. Available through European Schoolbooks.*
Livre de l'élève 1 ISBN 9 782011 549785 £6.95.
Cahier d'exercices 1 ISBN 9 782010 212376 £3.95.
Livre de l'élève 2 ISBN 9 782011 549846 £7.80
Cahier d'exercices 2 ISBN 9 782011 549839 £4.45.
Other elements available but not reviewed:
Audio cassettes 1 (2) £37.95 + VAT.
Audio cassette 1 – pour l'élève (not yet published).
Guide du professeur 1 £11.25.
Audio cassettes 2 (not yet published).
Audio cassette 2 – pour l'élève (not yet published).
Guide du professeur 2 (not yet published).

'Fréquence Jeunes' is a three-part course aimed at young adolescents learning French in Europe. The books are visually very attractive with uncluttered colour pages rich in photos and cartoons.

The teaching in the pupil's book is presented through three recurring elements: an engaging audio story presents the language, written 'magazine' material gives rise to written and reading work while introducing cultural knowledge of relevance to adolescents, and an excellent cartoon provides the student with revision of what has been taught.

The course is presented entirely in French, and the authors have succeeded very well in keeping the language of explanations and instructions quite simple while still appearing natural. At the end of each section of work there is a page entitled 'Rappelez-vous' where the grammar, functions (and in level 2 vocabulary) taught are succinctly and clearly summarised. The pupils' attention is systematically drawn to features of the French language such as stress, intonation, liaison, pronunciation etc. As well as the exercises, poetry etc. featured in the pupil's book there is a separate workbook-style 'cahier d'exercices' which provides extra practice of the material taught.

The grammatical progression in the course is quite fast, although revision of points taught is built into the material at regular intervals. At the back of each book there is a comprehensive 'Précis grammatical'. It would be unlikely, however, that the average pupil would be able to work from this usefully without considerable help from the teacher, since the explanations in French are quite sophisticated. At the back, too, is a vocabulary list with translations in 5 languages, including English.

The course appears to be structured very thoroughly and succeeds in providing a wealth of material and language that will be of interest to adolescents and that should not date too quickly.

Very well worth looking at!

JENNY OLLERENSHAW
The Open University

French Grammar – Your Guide. Val Levick, Glenise Radford. Alisdair McKeane. *1994 Malverne Language Guides, PO Box 76, Malvern WR4 2YP ISBN 1 898219 50 8 Price £3.00.*

This grammar reference book is aimed at pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4, and those preparing Scottish Standard Grade and Highers. It is a card-cover A5 booklet of just over 100 pages.

The tone of the book is friendly and reassuring and the student is often addressed directly. All points are thoroughly exemplified. At several points in the book the authors try to pre-empt the mistakes that Anglophone learners of French make and warn the students of grammatical pitfalls. (e.g. when discussing the Present Tense, 'You must **never** try to put in a word for *am, is* or *does* in these circumstances – they are already included in the verb form').

The book covers the very basic grammar points as well as more advanced points however I was surprised to find no reference at all to the subjunctive or to impersonal verb constructions. I found the balance of the grammar to be weighted in favour of lengthy explanations of the very basic points, leaving some of the more difficult points covered rather sketchily (for example 'y' and 'en' have 3 example sentences between them, and the students are simply told that 'Y means *there, to it*. and En means *of it, of them, some, any, from it, from them*'). A major problem for me was that the student is given no indication as to what is a 'core' grammar point, and what is a finer point of grammar. For example under the partitive article the following points are all given the same status and presented in the following order: using **de** when a verb is negative, using **de** instead of **des** before a plural adjective, using **de** with specific quantities, and using **de** in expressions such as combien de?', 'trop de' etc. Apart from the comment that 'in everyday speech **ne** is often omitted, or slurred over. This may **not** be done when writing' there is no indication as to the register of other grammatical structures (for instance register is not mentioned in the discussion about question formation).

The authors are clearly aware that many students are put off grammar because they find it difficult to get to grips with the metalanguage and concepts. They have therefore included a section at the beginning of the book entitled 'grammatical terms explained'. It is a pity that within the body of the text there are many quite complicated terms used which are not mentioned in this section (e.g. dative, genitive, compound tense, perfect infinitive etc.).

Cross-referencing is sporadic, and where it occurs no page number is given, so it would take a particularly eager student to follow it up.

As a reference grammar I find that the major drawback with the book is that the material is very difficult to access since there is no index. A clearer use of headings and layout would greatly help the student to navigate through the various sections.

Despite these problems it would be a useful additional source of grammar for students who already have a good grasp of grammatical concepts and want to update their knowledge.

JENNY OLLERENSHAW
The Open University

A Vos Marques. Janet Irwin and Sévérine Guillois. AVM concepts Ltd. PO Box 263, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2YS. *A set of 8 cassettes for younger children. £6.50 each or a complete set for £50 from WH Smith. Let's Sing in French Part 1 and Part 2, £7.75 each.*

The first eight cassettes cover topics such as verbs, numbers, colours, days of the week, time, shopping and holidays. My first impression on listening to these tapes was how similar they were to self-study language tapes for adults. These tapes are aimed at 'younger children' presumably Primary school and Year 7 pupils. I personally cannot see children of this age having the discipline to sit down and listen to these language tapes which require a lot of rote learning and repetition. I can't imagine my year 7 pupils being taken by a cassette which chants the verb avoir several times and then proceeds to spell it out: 'j'ai – j-a-i, tu as – t-u-a-s' etc. I think we have moved on from such techniques and we can find more creative and enjoyable ways of teaching verbs and vocabulary.

On the other hand my pupils found the song tapes much more enjoyable and motivating. On side 1 there is a lot of talking in between the songs and each French song has an equivalent English one. In my Primary class of twenty pupils, all of them definitely preferred side 2 where the songs were not interrupted by talking, which they found irritating. Sixteen pupils said they preferred to have just French songs and not English as well. The four remaining pupils said they did not mind the English songs but they preferred them to be a lot shorter and not repeated so many times. Despite these little niggles the pupils enjoyed the songs and learned a lot of French.

Le Français, c'est facile. Sue Brown, Sue Dean and Elissa Collins. John Murray. *1995. ISBN 07195 7100 6. £35.00 tape ISBN 07195 7110 3 £22.00 +£3.00 VAT.*

This photocopiable resources pack for Special Needs has been piloted in Special Schools but is also designed for use in mainstream schools. The pack contains nine modules, each one containing teaching notes and a planning sheet with suggestions for assignments and assessment. Each module is also accompanied by worksheets of pictures with the corresponding word written on the back. The first section of the pack consists of photocopiable worksheets focusing on simple words/phrases and pictures. The tasks involve writing the word for the pictures given or drawing the picture for the word given. The second section consists of games templates such as dominoes, wordsearches, battleships and pelmanism. This pack was favourably received by the Special Needs Department in my school although their one reservation was that the worksheets required adapting and modifying and were a starting base rather than something that could be lifted out and immediately used.

The song cassette, with songs on one side and the song tunes on the other, is accompanied by a booklet providing suggestions for incorporating the songs into lessons. I am a great believer of using songs as a method of teaching. However compared to other song tapes available on the market such as 'La Jolie Ronde' and 'A Vos Marques', these songs were a bit short of catchy, up-beat themes.

JULIA MINHAS
Comberton Village College, Cambridgeshire

Languages for the International Scientist. Edited by Gabrielle Parker and Catherine Reuben. *CILT. ISBN 1 874016 31 3. £9.50 + £1.75 postage from CILT Mail Order, PO Box 8, Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 4ZB or FAX 01559 370464.*

With a move towards modularity in science both in schools and in the higher education sector, science is becoming more palatable to a wider range of students; some of these might have opted for language at A or AS Lével. As there is now more of a move in the scientific community of working in scientific teams then there is a need for scientists to have confidence in a language to a greater extent than might have been required in the past. More universities are offering a 'science and language' package to their undergraduates in order to satisfy this demand; many of these courses provide an opportunity for students to spend up to a year abroad as part of their package. The year abroad is no longer the 'chasse gardée' of the modern languages undergraduate.

What the editors have done in this collection of papers is to bring together a variety of contributions which look at the issues of marrying science with modern languages. The main themes which run through the papers are that institutions which have successfully delivered a 'Language for Scientist' package do very much so in a bespoke method. There are no off-the-shelf courses which will work in institution A as well as at institution B. By tailor-making the courses to an individual department's or in some cases discipline's needs students feel that what they are learning is relevant. Colleagues who deliver such packages have to be humble in their ignorance of things scientific and be prepared to learn from the students. Some institutions provide courses for scientists *en bloc*, others try to subdivide scientists into their separate areas of study. I feel that this last point is vital: be careful of lumping 'scientists' together in one basket, how would 'Germanists' and 'Hispanists' like to be thought of as having the same needs and interests?

In one paper an FE Lecturer actually took an Electronics GCSE in order to produce student materials with a greater confidence. He found the experience quite exhilarating, working in a discipline far removed from his everyday experience.

This set of papers certainly provides ideas on how it is possible to link science teaching to the acquisition of relevant language. For those either thinking of, or already providing such courses in schools, colleges or universities then a read through of these papers will provide both ideas and suggestions on how to deliver the optimum course for your students' needs.

CLIVE THORPE
Framlingham College

Le français de la communication professionnelle. M. Danilo, J-L Penformis et M. Lincoln. *Clé International 1993. ISBN 2 19 033584 1 Student's book £9.50 from European Schoolbooks Ltd.*

Aimed at students of business French, specifically for examinations of the Paris Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie, with a minimum of 150 hours of study behind them, this book may also be useful for other courses with a work-related element. A cassette accompanying the course was not sent for review.

It is divided into ten sections dealing with aspects of business such as office routines, communications and personal relations, modern technology. Each section begins by setting out the area it covers schematically, and in doing so provides necessary vocabulary. There follow a variety of 'authentic' situation materials with exercises ranging from the simple matching question and answer or multiple choice to complex role-play or guided letter composition. A summary and check test of the ground covered complete each section.

The demands of the different exercises vary widely and the final tests cover only more elementary matters. A lot of teacher assistance and further student work is required to accomplish the more open-ended exercises. There is a certain emphasis on psychological insights in business dealings which together with some attempts at humorous treatment lightens some potentially rather dry material.

A. P. ROTHBART
Reading School

La Vie Politique en France Aujourd'hui: Readers in Contemporary French Civilisation. Edited by Claire Laudet and Richard Cox. *Manchester University Press. 1995. ISBN 0 7190 4218 6. pb: £29.99 pb: £9.99.*

This book is one of two of a new series in contemporary French studies; the second will be reviewed later. The aim of the Editors is to present to (mainly undergraduate) students a collection of texts which cover various aspects of French political life. My gut feeling is that these days students are more and more apolitical; getting them to give an opinion, let alone an informed one, about anything is becoming more and more of a difficult process and something like French political life can, if not dealt with sympathetically, phase all but the more dedicated. This collection of papers is intended to guide students through what can be quite a daunting topic.

The papers are collected together under three headings: institutions, ideologies and representation. The headings are further sub-divided into sections dealing with the specifics of each topic. The format for each sub-section is roughly the same: the Editors give a brief general introduction (in French) to the topic in question, there then follows an extract from a French author which is related to the topic in question, language difficulties are glossed with explanations in French following each text, finally there are some questions which test the students' comprehension.

If students can be guided through the book then they will acquire both a good overview of the political life of the Fifth Republic as well as an ability to crunch political texts. It is not a book for the faint hearted and must be used with care lest some students, who having found the transition from School to University quite demanding, throw in the towel. Maybe if they were to have read Ardagh before embarking on this series of texts then they will already have some background knowledge from which to work. I do like the introduction where the Editors give advice on how to tackle the problem of dense primary texts urging students to realise that one becomes more adept at understanding such pieces if one practises with them. Some Sixth Formers who perhaps are interested in Politics could be guided to one or two sections. Certainly worth having on your shelves.

CLIVE THORPE
Framlingham College

Grand Dictionnaire Larousse 1993. *French–English (978pp) + Conjugaisons (8 pages). English–French (1042pp) + Irregular verbs (2 pages). One Atlas between the 2 sections – one volume. ISBN 2 03 440 100 X Paris. ISBN 2 03 420 100 0 New York. ISBN 2 03 430 100 5 London £25.*

An amazing similarity between the present volume and the ISBN 2 03 403 300X, Larousse, 1993 reviewed by Rachel Hoare in Francophonie No. 11 (same cover, same lexicographers, same objectives, composition, design, type-setting, pagination and cartography)? This is because the only differences are the presentation (one volume instead of two, one atlas between the two sections instead of one in each volume) and the reduction in price made possible by such savings.

The Booksellers I interviewed stated that this new presentation was an attempt to capture the market which the two volume presentation had failed to do. Therefore, as regards the substance may I invite our colleagues to refer to R. Hoare's excellent review (Francophonie No. 11 pp. 56–57) to which I will merely add a few comments. First of all I welcome the many well researched entries (such as the one on 'tapisserie' or those on 'insertion' 'reinsertions') to name but a few. Nuances of meaning and usage are thoroughly explored and clearly outlined.

Nevertheless I regret the absence of some new words or expressions such as **l'exclusion la cinéscénie, les séniors and le quatrième âge** (except as an example within 'age') – I would warn the user that many new expressions such as 'les aînés', 'se sentir interpellé par' (une cause, une tragédie) are not only – or even not frequently – humorous. Reflecting contemporary usage should be one of the objectives of a translation dictionary.

Moreover I doubt the advisability of giving such admittedly accurate and learned but arcane and unhelpful translations as 'acarid' for 'acarien' whose *real* English-equivalent is 'housedust mite'; I also regret the failure to point out the *real* difference, not in meaning but in usage, between 'brun' and 'marron', and I puzzle at the accurate but misleading translation of 'buckwheat' as 'blé noir' – it would seem wiser to state that 'buckwheat' *is* 'sarrasin', which is colloquially called 'blé noir' but that sarrasin is *no* more 'blé than 'buckwheat' is 'wheat'...

Such pitfalls should not be a disincentive for the student of French to use Larousse 1993 but should serve as a cautionary tale: a translation dictionary is never more than . . . a translation dictionary. The Larousse AF/FA 1993 is a *good starting point* for exploring meaning and usage but the monolingual dictionary remains the Bible of the student of language. Thus on the whole, like R. Hoare I feel it should be highly recommended. However the earlier version fulfils the second stated aim of 'ease of use' far better – this new version is cumbersome and tiring to use. Moreover it loses its potential for pairwork on language exploration.

Despite the higher price schools and colleges would be well advised to buy the earlier two volume edition while stocks last (it will be discontinued) as they would thus acquire two easily handled and reliable research tools.

MICHELLE PEPRATX-EVANS
Trinity and All Saints, The University of Leeds

The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French. Edited by Peter France. *Clarendon Press 1995. ISBN 0 19 866125 8. £30.*

This is a successor to the well-known Oxford Companion to French Literature, not a new edition. The title 'Literature in French' points to the francophone and not exclusively French focus of the new work. 'Francophonie' has its own entry concerned with cultural politics, and there are many others that broaden the scope beyond the narrowly literary to other art forms: music, cinema, 'bande dessinée', for example.

Specifically compiled by and for English-speaking readers, it has a strong Scottish representation among its contributors. It seeks to reflect writing up to the present (1990 in effect), acknowledging that in this as in all areas, it reflects current judgments that a future generation will revise. It is difficult to strike the balance between factual encyclopedia entries and the attempt to assess and place in context. Historical events and figures, movements in the arts, science and religion, administrative organisations, even foreign influences have their place. The work does not claim to be exhaustive: I drew a blank on Eugène Le Roy and his novel of peasant rebellion, 'Jacquou le croquant', and on Raymond Guérin, a novelist of the middle of this century.

Many thematic articles on a wide range of subjects form one of the bolder features of the volume. Inevitably within the bounds allotted, they can only point briefly at the issues discussed. Further indications for reference are unfortunately sparse in some cases. The social and cultural background essential to deeper understanding will certainly be helped by these articles, often thought-provoking by the questions they leave unanswered. 'Police' hints at some of the social issues involved in both the past and the present in its survey of developments. 'Education' offers a historical approach, but does not get to grips with recent 'réformes'.

In addition to the main dictionary, there is a chronology setting authors against contemporary politics and society over fifteen hundred years. Maps of Paris, France and the francophone world are also usefully included. Articles are attributed by initials, with the index list of these slightly confusingly following surname order.

This is a book that deserves a place in any reference library where French is studied, and will provide information and enjoyable browsing for curious readers.

A. P. ROTHBART
Reading School

A l'Ecoute des professionels. Monique Lebre-Peytard. *Clé International. Student's book ISBN 09070 £7.15. Cassette ISBN 09071 £18.50 + VAT (not received for review).*

This work is based on authentic unscripted interviews. The texts of the interviews with thirteen representatives of different professions are given in print at the back of the book. Curiously they appear without any punctuation at all and no capital letters except for proper nouns. The transcriptions appear in the form 'de quoi vous vous occupez/euh comment ça se passe/'.

Each of the thirteen units contains exercises, some of them ingenious, based on the tape and transcription or closely linked to them.

It is likely that the materials would be suitable for students working towards the National Language Units within NVQ and GNVQ at level three.

Les combinés du téléphone. J. Lamoureux. *Presses Universitaires de Grenoble. (Distributed in the UK by European Schoolbooks Ltd.) ISBN 2 7061 0516 X. Textbook £6.50 (cassette available but not received for review).*

Talking on the telephone – in any language – is a skill which is not automatic and has to be mastered. Deprived of visual clues, a telephone user has to be very precise in what he/she asks for and in the information he/she supplies.

This text book, suitable for 'A' level students and candidates for vocational qualifications, contains texts of increasing difficulty, in terms of linguistic structure and in terms of the situations presented. Roleplay activities – we must learn to call them simulations – with a commercial or secretarial flavour are provided in each chapter, exploiting the taped material.

Chapter seven introduces in written form those oral contractions which are such a part of normal spoken French. To alert students to the phenomenon, they are presented with such utterances as "Kesta? Sita mal a la tete, taqua prendre dlaspirine" to rewrite into more standard French. I have some reservations about the orthographic convention they have used and about the wisdom of presenting students with such non-standard forms in writing.

Minor reservations aside, this is a well presented book which can usefully be exploited whether in the classroom or as a source of homework activities. A great virtue of the book is that all of it is in French.

Get by in French. Pierrick Picot. *BBC Books. Book and two cassettes ISBN 0 563 39956 2. £12.99.*

It really is difficult to fault these materials. The introduction says that the course is designed for 'those who have little or no knowledge of French, so that they can get more enjoyment from their trips abroad'. I tested the materials on members of my own family who fit into that category and they reacted with enthusiasm. The pack contains a wealth of factual information, relevant structures and vocabulary. For instance it refers to 'essence sans plomb' and 'super sans plomb', terms missing in many basic text books and even from the syllabus of at least one GCSE awarding body.

Whilst this pack was not designed for use in schools or with adult evening classes, I consider that it would make a useful starting point in both settings. The 96-page course book is available separately for £3.99.

The only quibble I have concerns the 'blurb' on the back cover. It contains the claim that 'You can learn to "Get By" in one week or more of your leisure'. I am afraid that such claims have to be treated with extreme caution and are best avoided.

H. S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

Le Français à Grande Vitesse. S. Truscott, M. Mitchell and B. Tauzin. *Hachette. ISBN 0 0 9242. £10.95.*

Published as an intensive course Le *Français à Grande Vitesse*, has the sole objective of enabling one to work in French as rapidly and as efficiently as possible – what many business people want perhaps before they move on to something more specialised. The introduction itself states that the one volume can be covered in 150 hours, although this can be adapted to suit. Language tutors put together courses – many excellent – from a variety of textbooks adding authentic materials and realia to fit the time-scale: a purpose-written course such as this might save hard-pressed tutors time and energy

The authors and the publisher, seem to have created this publication for those with a variety of mother tongues learning

French. The introduction and all the rubrics are in the target language – as with many other courses – but at the end there is a 'lexique' in French, English, Italian, German, Spanish and Greek. The bias is towards mainland Europe, with very few British characters for places mentioned in the dialogues or exercises.

The detailed 'Contenus' identifying objectives, grammar and cultural points is tabulated very clearly and the objectives are picked up again at the beginning of each unit where the learner is told what will be learned. There is no progress check at the end, however. The units each follow a similar pattern – an introductory dialogue sets the scene and acts as a model to be called upon for subsequent reworking. Key phrases and vocabulary are noted in French, but one has to turn to the end for meanings. Various listening exercises precede speaking exercises and roleplays. Reading and writing exercises are often integrated into communicative activities. A short, more formal pronunciation section follows containing several phrases to listen to and repeat. Fulfilling one of the proposals of the course, there follows a progressive grammar section exemplifying the points met in the unit in the target language. Individual exercises offer further grammar practice. At the end of each unit, there is an extremely useful 'Note Culturelle' which often takes the form of pieces of authentic material – facts and figures, adverts, etc – a feature where teachers have often had to include their own material to consolidate somewhat meagre details in comparison.

The last unit is made up of 'Situations' to put everything into practice in simulation-type activities where the four skill areas may need to be used in conjunction with each other. At the end there are transcriptions of the listening exercises, followed by a grammar summary and a short section entitled 'Actes de Parole' where a range of linguistic objectives are summarised prior to the 'lexique'.

There is a teacher's guide and 3 cassettes, but these were not offered for review.

Having read the above, all may seem very familiar to those in this field – yes, *Le Français à Grande Vitesse* is virtually identical to the authors' other publications, *Working with French* (foundation level) or *Talking Business French* (see my review of this in an earlier issue of Francophonie: June 1993). There are additions of role-play exercises, mainland European names and places, and a much improved cultural section (a valuable item, in my opinion), otherwise the texts are virtually the same with the pictures and photographs being identical. It is disconcerting to find the same photos of characters with different identities!

In my opinion, if you already have copies of the prior publications *Le Français à Grande Vitesse* is merely the third version of the same with a few extras that many teachers produce anyway. If you do not possess either, *Le Français à Grande Vitesse* would be the one to go for, as it contains much useful material for an adult learner of any nationality whether for business purposes or not. It is also much more pleasing to the eye in layout and typeface, and although advertised as an intensive course, it could be used successfully in any type of learning situation.

AUDREY FAIRGRIEVE
Kidlington

Let's Play Games in French. Bernard Crawshaw. *European Schoolbooks Limited. ISBN 0 8442 1269 1. £8.95 .*

French Verbs and Vocabulary Bingo Games. Constance Corssar, Barbara Synder – Consultant. *European Schoolbooks Limited. ISBN 0 8442 1307 1. £424.95.*

We all know how motivating games are in our language lessons and what a useful tool they are for that last five minutes of the lesson. The first of these books is divided into three sections namely for beginners, intermediate and advanced students. The games last for up to 15 minutes and have been tried and tested in French classes. A lot of the games are well-known such as Kim's game, I spy, Consequences and Twenty Questions. Others are ones that you probably already use such as getting pupils to write and then read out a description of a person for others to guess who it is. The games for advanced students would be appropriate for a top year 11 class. Many of these games in this section are more sophisticated versions of games from the other two sections.

The second book contains 68 masters divided into a vocabulary section and a verb section. The games are aimed at pupils with one year's knowledge of French. Lists of words for each game are provided to enable you, the teacher, to equip the pupils, in advance, with the knowledge they'll need to play the game. Both these books are useful to dip into although the second one is rather pricey and would entail a lot of photocopying. However I feel you would gain just as much if you brainstormed with your colleagues and shared all your ideas for games.

L'Express, Aujourd'hui la France, choix de textes présentés par, Ross Steele et José Pavis. *Oxford University Press. ISBN 0 19 912202 4. £7.50.*

This book, written completely in French, is a collection of over 40 articles, interviews and opinion polls previously published in *L'Express*. The texts focus on varying aspects of today's French society and cover a multitude of topics such as the different generations, drugs, the geography of France, consumers, French-speaking countries, ecology and the environment. Each text is accompanied by a framework of questions and tasks for reading and writing including a section for oral work. There is also a vocabulary section where key words are clarified in French.

This book would stretch the most able pupils in Year 11 and is ideal for the first year of an 'A' level course. What I particularly like about this book is that it is all in the target language; the layout of the texts is eye catching; the texts are well presented and reader friendly and are accompanied by pictures, graphs and tables. The texts have been carefully selected and if your pupils find reading a French newspaper too off-putting then this book is an excellent alternative.

JULIA MINHAS
Comberton Village College, Cambridgeshire

The French Experience. *BBC. Published August 1994 and transmitted from October 1994, this is a multi-media course for beginners' French.*
Course book ISBN 0 563 36781 4 £10.99.
2 audio cassettes ISBN 0 563 39902 3 £12.99.
ISBN 0 563 39902 4 £12.99.
4 CD's ISBN 0 563 39903 1 £35.00.
Activity book ISBN 0 563 39901 5 £4.99.
Tutor's guide ISBN 0 563 39900 7 £19.99.
Tutor's cassettes ISBN 0 563 39936 8 £14.99.
The French Experience Pack ISBN 0 563 39910 4 £37.50.

For years I have searched for a French course suitable for adult night classes, one that is not patronising, nor over – complicated and an approach that is not geared towards the adolescent student. My search is now over. The BBC has produced a very exciting, user-friendly programme of study.

The course consists of recordings on either cassettes or C.D.s, a student's manual, a Tutor's guide and an activity to supplement the material already covered in the student's book.

The principal course book is fully illustrated, with easy to follow instructions and exercises. The cartoons are appealing and humorous and the layout is uncomplicated.

I particularly liked the Points de Repère, which leaves the student with a full list of objectives and a page reference for those who have not fully understood the salient points.

The pace of the book IS rapid. Chapter 1 deals with saying your name, age, profession, where you live – country, where you were born, how you feel and numbers 20–70. However this is not a criticism but a positive aspect of the course. The student can linger on the subtleties of en France and au Japon or merely learn en Angleterre as the only useful item.

The Chapters then focus on familiar topics but with an adult reader in mind. Family is dealt with under 'marital status'. Accommodation goes beyond the basics of booking into a hotel, to discuss reporting the fact that the heating is not working etc.

An important aspect of the course is that it is not necessary to have a tutor. The autonomous learner is helped by 'phonetic sections' – which explain clearly the intricacies of pronunciation, and also has the answers to the exercises at the end of the book.

The tutor's guide is very useful and gives some sound advice. The accompanying photocopiable material is mostly of a good standard. The cue-cards, however, resemble a M.E.G. Higher 2 narrative in their use of infinitives and these tasks can be very demanding.

As would be expected from the BBC, the quality of the recordings is of a very high standard. I liked the idea of the CD version but in practice it was less manageable when the exercise required rewinding short extracts or phrases.

The workbook is a good source of additional exercises and would allow the student to consolidate some of the aspects covered. However, in my opinion, it was less attractive than the other components.

SCAA, Sir Ron and the disciples of Target Language will be disappointed with the course. However those who come to French as mature students, having learned a language under the old regime, would find it extremely accessible and be comfortable and confident in their 'French Experience'.

D. J. BUTCHER
Nottingham

Soleil. Eliane Papo and Iva Cintrat. *Didier/Hatier.*
Student's book part 1. ISBN 000680 £8.95.
Cahier d'exercices part 1. ISBN 000681 £3.95.
Student's book part 2. ISBN 000683 £9.95.
Cahier d'exercices part 2. ISBN 000685 £3.95.

Soleil is a new three year French course for year 7 students upwards. Published in France and written entirely in the target language, Soleil consists of a student's book and accompanying workbook, recorded cassettes and teacher's book for each of the levels of study (level 3 not yet in print).

The student's book uses a colourful style, including bright photos of life in France, to create a fun and distinctly French atmosphere.

Each book consists of 8 units using authentic, colloquial language to provide a communicative approach. With each are 4–5 dialogues set in real situations and about 20 activities ranging from simple questions to rhythm and intonation exercises, role plays, tongue-twisters, songs, poems and even yoga-style relaxation exercises! Most of the exercises are on tape and can therefore be used to practice a variety of skills. The recordings would be particularly useful in conjunction with the rhythm and intonation work. In fact, Soleil has lots of opportunity for students to improve their spoken language.

Reading for pleasure texts are introduced from the beginning and gradually increase in length. These encompass a range of styles and are, I feel, one of the course's best features.

Each unit ends with a structured grammar and use of language section, spelling exercises and a few pages on 'culture et civilisation'. The topics covered here are diverse, for example, how the French greet each other, where French is spoken, theatre, painting, and many more. I particularly like the way such varied and important aspects of learning French were introduced at an early stage and in such a fun way.

The cahier d'exercices provides essential reinforcement of language. The book is written clearly and includes answers in the middle pages. These could be pulled out or left to encourage pupils to work independently, marking their own work. There is a cartoon to read for pleasure at the end of each unit, another feature I liked.

This is the first book I have used that is written solely in the target language (there is not even a vocabulary reference at the back). Many students therefore required precise clarification of tasks.

I enjoyed using Soleil and feel that it is a valuable, up-to-date resource which shows that language learning is fun.

REGINA HAGUE
Hinchingbrooke School

OK! Tactile. *Cleveland Educational Computing Centre. Produced to support the French Special Needs Course OK! from Stanley*

Thornes Publishers Ltd. £35.00. Available for BBC and Acorn, a PC version is being developed.

The package consists of 35 files, overlays, worksheets and notes using the Presstige program for the concept keyboard which allows sounds as well as graphics and text. The overlays can be used with the audio cassette from the OK! course. The overlays compliment themes used in the course and are on six disks. The accompanying notes clearly identify which items the file relates to. The program can be used in conjunction with a word processing package.

In the picture-word matching option where the keyboard is pressed and the word is spoken the word appears on the screen. Pupils can type in what they hear and can print it. There is a wide range of other types of activity to help the pupil both to learn the vocabulary and to use it for him or herself. Differentiated levels within the overlays are made clear in the teacher's notes. The Acorn version can show a mini version of the keyboard on the screen which facilitates a quick check by the teacher that all is in order before the pupils use the program. This can be very useful.

It must be pointed out that the Acorn version is more flexible than the BBC version and offers a wider range of activities for the pupils. The BBC version has Concept Match for vocabulary reinforcement and Prompt Writer which allows pupils to produce their own writing. There are five disks: two Concept Match and three Prompt Writer. The accompanying notes advise on differentiation.

The OK! course is written for pupils with special educational needs and one of its many excellent features is the clarity of the guidance given; the same holds true of the concept keyboard materials.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Route Nationale Extra 1 & 2.
Extra 1: £50.00 +VAT. ISBN 0-17-439943-X.
Extra 2: £50.00 + VAT. ISBN 0-17-439946-4.
Margaret Butler, Ros Martin and Daphne Philpot. *Nelson 1995.*

Route Nationale, like all the other new National Curriculum courses published recently, aims to cater for the wide range of ability pupils which we have in our classes. One of the principal attractions of the course is the clear system of differentiation within the activities it offers. There are three levels of difficulty for pupils to work at within each unit, each following the road theme. However there are still pupils for whom the core activities are too demanding. This is where the Extra materials come into their own. Route Nationale Extra provides the extra support those pupils require, as an integral part of the course. Thus the pupils, often with learning difficulties, can feel part of the mainstream rather than separate.

The Extra package offers a collection of copymasters with a duplicating master cassette. The copymasters are designed to complement the core activities and provide practice in the vocabulary and structures with support for pronunciation, listening, reading and supported writing. The emphasis is on accessibility and putting success within reach of the less able pupil. The copymasters are clear and uncluttered, with reduced content and easily understood rubrics. They are suitable for homework setting as they are self-supporting. The 'J' ai compris' sections make on the spot self-assessment easy to organise which encourages lower ability pupils.

We have found the copymasters invaluable as OHT's to support our teaching of groups of all abilities and would recommend these materials to anyone using Route Nationale who find that they have pupils who are finding the course daunting. The Extra packs have been used for a term now and have become an integral part of our schemes of work. We feel that they have opened up the course to a number of pupils who levels of confidence have risen as a result.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

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Contributions
The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French.

Articles written in French are particularly welcome

Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

a) Articles of about 3000 words.
b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (longer reviews or articles may be accepted),

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation
Articles should be submitted either typewritten or on computer disk (plus hard copy)

a) Typewritten: Type with double spacing. Typewriters or word processors should be set at 44 characters (the equivalent of the line length), as this will help the Editor plan the arrangement of the journal. Please send two copies of the article and keep one for yourself. One copy of the article should be 'clean' (with no corrections) to enable the printer to scan it. If there are any changes or corrections these should be made on the second copy.
b) Disk: Send 3½" or 5¼" disks (NB not Amstrad Cf2 disks) in double, single or high density formats. Most word processing packages are acceptable but if you have any query contact the ALL office. Also send in one hard copy of the article with the disk, and keep one for yourself.

Give your article one short title (not a title and a subtitle), and divide it up with brief subheadings.

Give full references for all sources quoted. Journal policy is to put these at the end of the article and not at the bottom of the page.

Illustrations
Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing
In order to be considered for including in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by 1st February and 1st August. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

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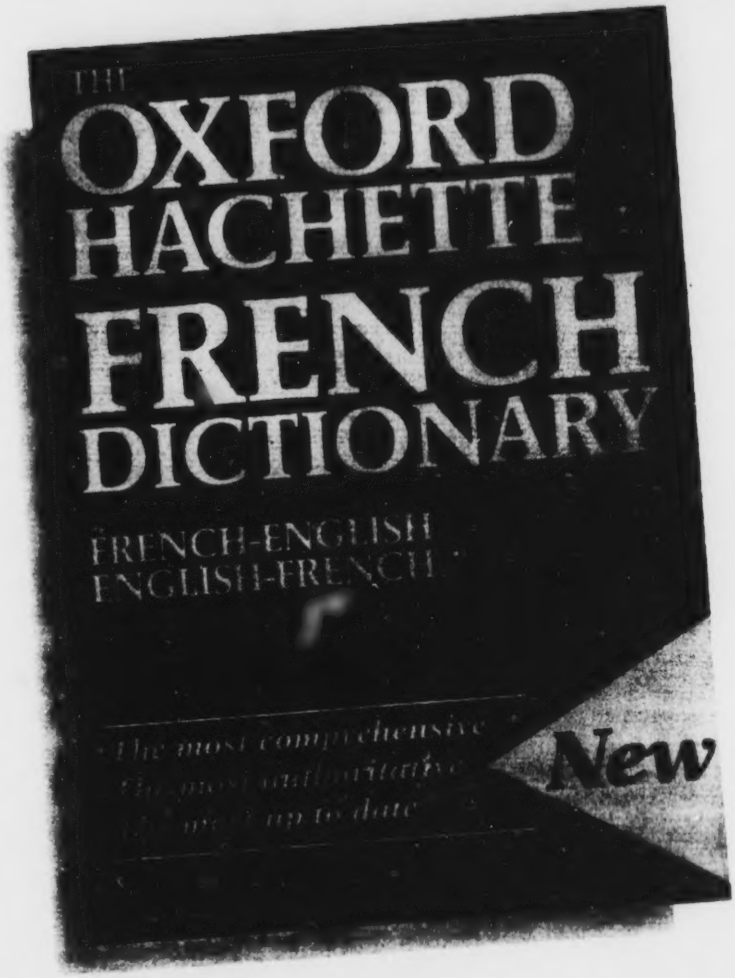
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December 1995 No. 12

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Grammar: what is taught and what is learned

Contemporary French Songs

The BBC French experience 1996

JUNE 1996
No 13

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Grammar: what is taught, and what is learned

David Nott Lancaster University

> The maner to reade and to pronounce the Frenche is difficult: for it is written for the most part other wise then it is pronounced: and is learned more by use then by rules. Nevertheles, a man may wel learn these fewe rules.
>
> (*Plaine Pathway*, 1575, in D. A. Kibbee, 1989)

1. Introduction

On what basis should one decide which points of the French language to present systematically and analytically to students, which to present as lexical items, idioms and collocations, and which to ignore altogether, leaving their acquisition to chance or to students' own choice?

Littlewood (1984, pp. 87–8) refers to studies which suggest that errors of vocabulary have the greatest effect on communication, and pronunciation errors the least effect, with errors of grammar coming in between, though certain 'particularly serious' errors of pronunciation have a great effect on communication. Littlewood also draws an important distinction between 'global' errors of grammar which, he says, generally hinder communication more than 'local' errors: 'A global error is one which affects the overall organisation of a sentence, such as the wrong use of a conjunction or inappropriate ordering of major word groups. A local error is one whose effect is restricted to the elements within a smaller group, such as the omission of an ending or misuse of the definite article' (p. 88). Referring to the potential value of studies of the communicative effect of second language learners' speech for devising appropriate goals for learners and suitable criteria for evaluating their performance, Littlewood concludes: 'At the general level, they emphasise the primacy of intelligibility over formal accuracy. At the more specific level, they indicate some of the factors which determine whether a learner achieves intelligibility' (p. 89).

In deciding priorities for teaching, three additional criteria would seem to be indispensable:

- **frequency** of use by native speakers, at all socio-situational levels;
- the different ways in which the **phonological** and the **orthographic** systems of French encode semantic, morphological and syntactic features of the language;
- features of pronunciation, lexis, grammar, usage, idiom or style which cause particular problems for **anglophones** learning French.

What follows is an attempt to provide some evidence, from students' actual performance in French, about the third of these criteria: points of language which give most difficulty to anglophone learners at undergraduate level, including a comparison of the frequency of occurrence of these errors in each of the three home-based years of the course (referred to hereafter as Y1, Y2 and Y4).

This evidence can perhaps help to apply not only the third, but all three of the criteria listed above to the teaching of French at undergraduate level, and to formulate realistic goals for students.

2. A corpus of errors of spoken French

The interest of studying a corpus of errors originating from students' spoken rather than written performance lies in the fact that the student, faced with a target audience present in the room, is more likely to be concentrating on communicating a message than on the careful and conscious manipulation of a linguistic system, and will thus tend to be off guard, linguistically speaking; written performance and its evaluation, on the other hand, are influenced by attention to spelling, and to morphological aspects of grammar, many of which are redundant as regards communication of meaning.

Nevertheless, errors of pronunciation are to some extent the equivalent, in spoken communication, of errors of spelling in written communication; it is important, at all levels of teaching French as a second language, to enable the learner to make constant links, in both directions, between French phonology and orthography. If either of these is emphasised separately, it will tend to have a detrimental influence on the other: we have all come across students who seem to be attempting to speak French 'as it is written', and others who tend to write French 'as it is spoken'; in both cases, this means that students are still transferring to their use of French some of the patterns of the phonology, or of the orthography, of English. (For a fascinating study of French spelling variations among students and *lycéens* in France, and of teachers' evaluation of these variations, see Lucci, 1994.)

3. Scope and limitations of this study

The errors referred to in this paper were all noted during 251 assessed oral exposés (81 in Year 1, 77 in Year 2, 93 in Year 4) given between 1988 and 1995 by students in front of a class. Exposés were given by individual students, except for 42 exposés given by 2–3 students in Y2, and 4 given in Y4. The figures and tables compiled on the basis of these errors do not constitute a statistically reliable guide to the actual frequency of particular lexical, morphological and syntactical errors of French or, *a fortiori*, of particular categories or sub-sets of errors in these students' oral production. Since the exposés were not recorded, some errors will have passed unnoticed; in any case, 'accuracy' was only one of a number of performance features being assessed. Nor does this study provide information on students' ability to produce correct forms of the language: the nature of the data (originally gathered for pedagogic feedback purposes) makes it impossible to follow Labov's principle of 'accountable reporting', i.e. the analysis of the total number of tokens, both correct and incorrect, of a particular feature. (In 1995, some of the Y4 exposés used in this survey were recorded and discussed, as part of an exercise on the evaluation of students' spoken performance, conducted jointly with the Department of Linguistics and the Institute for English Language Education at Lancaster University.)

An error analysis approach to students' performance in French has other limitations:

- it draws attention to failures of communication or imperfections of performance, rather than to successes;
- it does not investigate the learning strategies that students apply, or the nature of their 'map' of the language; for example, several types of error can arise from erroneous notions about more than one feature of the language;
- levels of competence and sophistication in using French, and in formulating and expressing ideas, vary from one student to another, so that a low incidence of error in certain categories may simply be an indication that many students have not attempted to use certain forms.

Although figures are broken down according to year, this is not a longitudinal study as such: performance of individual students, groups or cohorts, is not followed through from Y1 to Y4. (A separate study, not reported here, of errors in exposés given by the same ten students in both Y1 or Y2 and Y4, suggested that there were wide individual variations in the development of the accuracy of their pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.)

In comparing figures for Y2 and Y4, it should be noted that some 10% of Y4 students were following a Minor course in French, and were thus Y3 students who had not spent a year abroad; a further 20% of Y4 students spent the year abroad in Germany, Austria or Italy, followed by a month's language course at a French university. The rest spent their year abroad in France. (A separate comparison, not reported here, of exposés given in Y2 and Y4 by students who spent the YA in France, and by those who did not, suggested that accuracy of pronunciation, relative to accuracy of vocabulary and grammar, was far greater for students who had spent the YA in France, than for those who had not.)

4. Evaluation of errors of lexis and grammar

Evaluation of students' pronunciation is a relatively straightforward matter: firstly, students produce sounds which either are, or are not, 'acceptable' in terms of phonetics (ability or failure to produce French *r* or *u*, for example) or phonology (ability or failure to distinguish between nasal *-an* and denasalised *-ane*, for example); secondly, the learner of French is required to recognise, and above all to produce, most or all of the sounds of French at a relatively early stage of learning the language: errors of pronunciation are therefore observable whatever the degree of complexity or sophistication of the utterance.

Evaluation of students' lexis and grammar, on the other hand, is more complex, although many errors of lexis and grammar are of the simple right/wrong type: substitution of *humeur* for *humour*, for example, failure to use the subjunctive after *il faut que*, or omission of *que* in /**je pense elle a raison*/ or of *pas* in /**je ne crois qu'il va venir*/; but when comparing the incidence of errors between students in the different years, it is important to bear in mind that final year students, most of whom have recently spent 8–9 months in France, may feel more confident in using the language, and therefore be more adventurous, with the consequent risk of making more 'advanced' errors. Conversely, many exposés in Y1 are relatively simple, in terms of such features as sentence-structure, whereas students in Y2 often seek to express more complex and sophisticated ideas in their exposés, with a concomitant rise in the incidence of linguistically more complex utterances, at a stage when their mastery of some of these constructions is as yet incomplete. The present study provides no means of investigating possible links between the types of error made and students' competence as measured by their performance in the exposé. It would indeed be useful to know whether certain types of error tend to occur in the French of non-native learners of all levels of competence, or whether certain types of error are more characteristic of learners whose overall performance in French is at one end of the scale (low or high).

For certain types of error, particularly those of adjective and verb agreement, it is difficult, in the absence of detailed knowledge of the interlanguage of the student concerned, to decide under which heading they should be counted:

- /**la langue français*/: does this represent a phonological error (failure to sound mute final *s* when followed by mute *e*), or a morphological error (failure to make the adjective agree)? The same error, appearing in a piece of written work, would still not be a wholly reliable guide to the nature and extent of the student's competence: would this student pronounce the *s*, or not?
- /**ils prend*/: has the student failed to master the positional rules for nasal vowels and denasalisation, forgotten the forms of the verb *prendre*, or neglected to make the verb agree with its subject? Evidence for it being a phonological error would be provided if the same student made other errors involving nasal vowel/denasalised vowel oppositions; evidence for it being an error of morphology or agreement would be provided only by analysis of written production by the same student, where failure to make a verb agree with its subject would appear in errors such as **ils travaille*, which would not be

detectable in speech. (For a discussion of issues involved in identifying and classifying errors in students' (written) production (of English as a second language), see Kroll, 1990, 142-7.)

The present study concentrates on *language-specific* features – lexis, morphology, syntax – of students' spoken production. The level of sophistication of both content and use of language formed part of the evaluation of individual students' performance, but is not analysed in the present study. Nor are stylistic errors, and lack of variety or complexity in sentence-structure, though these were noted in the feedback notes given to and discussed with individual students. Other discourse features which form part of each individual's overall linguistic and pragmatic competence, and which as such may be common to utterances in both Ll and L2, are not analysed here; the presence or absence of such phenomena plays an important part in successful communication, and as such should figure in the objectives of a FL course, among the skills to be developed. Nor has any attempt been made to evaluate students' performance in terms of fluency. Studies carried out with Flemish learners of French (Dewaele 1994 and 1995) suggest that, in some respects, fluency and (morphological) accuracy tend to go together.

5. The pedagogical context

The list of errors noted for each student, and which constitutes the basic data for this study, formed part of a systematic sequence of guidance and feedback, associated with the oral exposés given by each group of students:

Guidance was given, before the series of exposés began, to the group as a whole, on:

- choosing and defining a topic (in cases when a free choice of topic was given);
- identifying a limited number of areas and issues within the topic;
- organising these points into a coherent argument leading to a clear conclusion;
- making notes in the form of headings and cue-words/phrases, not sentences (with a warning that texts written out and then read out would be heavily penalised);
- introducing the topic and announcing the main line to be followed in the exposé;
- delivering the exposé: speech rate and flow, pauses, avoidance of slang or informal expressions, addressing the exposé to the whole group.

Feedback, at the end of the series of exposés (spread over 3–6 weeks) for each group, included going over with each student individually the list of lexical and morphosyntactical errors noted during the exposé. The nature of the error was elucidated, with further explanation and practice as appropriate. Other features of the feedback discussion were:

- explanation of how the final mark was arrived at;
- a summary of the main strengths and weaknesses of the exposé, in terms of subjectmatter, ordering, language and presentation;
- discussion of any marked difference in performance between the exposé itself and the more informal follow-up question and answer session;
- encouragement and/or suggestions for remedial action.

(This follow-up session normally occupied the whole of one class hour, for a group of 10–12 students.)

6. Summary of the data

For the purposes of this study, the 1924 lexical and morphosyntactical errors noted were divided into three types:

M –	errors mainly involving word **meaning**	(semantic errors)
F –	errors mainly involving the **form** of words	(morphological errors)
U –	errors mainly involving language **use**	(errors of syntax)

Comparison of overall rates of error per 10 minutes (9.1 in Y1, 7.8 in Y2, 6.1 in Y4) suggests that students tend to make fewer lexical and morphosyntactical errors as they proceed through the degree course, but that this progression is far less marked than in the case of pronunciation errors (see Nott, 1994). **Between Y1 and Y2**, there is a fall of nearly 30% in the rate errors of morphology (F), in terms of syntax (U), the fall is negligible, and semantic (M) errors even rise slightly. **Between Y2 and Y4**, the pattern changes: the fall in the frequency of error is more evenly distributed over the three areas, in the order Use, Form, Meaning: 23.7%, 20.5%, 19.4%, respectively. These figures tend to suggest that prolonged and perhaps intensive exposure to French increases students' security in terms of word meaning (semantic competence) and language use (syntactic competence), without hindering their progress in terms of word forms (morphological competence).

Analysis of different categories within the three areas M, F and U, however, shows that there are wide variations between categories, but since the average number of errors in each category in each year is approximately 38, these figures should be interpreted with caution, especially where small differences from year to year are concerned. Nevertheless, by considering in particular cases when, and how well students' performance improves, it may be possible to suggest some priorities for teaching and learning.

7. The most frequent errors within each category

Meaning

(1.53 in Y1/1.60 in Y2/1.29 in Y4 per 10 mn; 19.6% of all errors)

Ml Verbs

(.47/.51/.45 per 10 mn; 6.4% of all errors)

Errors were noted for a total of 78 different groups of verbs; the verbs most frequently used with the wrong meaning were in the following groups:

épouser marier se marier	9 errors
connaître faire la connaissance de être au courant de savoir	9
faire partie de être une partie (+adj) de occuper une place (dans)	6
demander qch poser une question	5
(entendre) dire que (entendre) parler de	4

Although some errors in this category can be ascribed to the literal transposition of *faux amis*, and a few others (*demander une question, contrôler, réaliser, se relaxer, pouvoir/savoir*) reflect the personal, social or regional hesitations or variations of some francophones, the majority concern verbs and verb phrases in everyday use by all francophones. There would seem to be a case for identifying a moderate number of the most frequently-used synonyms, and inviting students to examine and practise them.

M2 Nouns

(.59/.60/.47 per 10 mn; 7.3% of all errors)

Errors were noted for a total of 91 different groups of nouns; the nouns most frequently used with the wrong meaning were in the following groups:

gens individu(s) personne(s)	12 errors
compagnie entreprise firme société	7
aptitude capacité	4
morceau part partie peu pièce	4

The effect of *faux amis*, and of variation among francophones, is probably similar in the case of nouns to what it is for verbs: noticeable, but not overwhelming.

M3 Adjectives

(.18/.16/.14 per 10 mn; 2.1% of all errors)

Errors were noted for a total of 22 different groups of adjectives; those most frequently used with the wrong meaning were in the following groups (in addition, 4 errors of adjective position have been included here):

augmenté élevé étendu grand haut	11 errors
célèbre fameux	3

As with verbs (**M1**) and nouns (**M2**), concentration of students' attention on a small number of groups of adjectives would seem preferable, by way of remedial action, than the wholesale learning of long lists. (The separation of semantic errors involving verbs, nouns and adjectives into three different categories has been done purely for the purposes of this study, and does not constitute good pedagogical practice – quite the opposite, in fact.)

M4 Adverbs and prepositions

(.29/.32/.24 per 10mn; 3.7% of all errors)

Errors were noted for a total of 34 different groups of adverbs and prepositions; adverbs and prepositions most frequently used with wrong meanings were as follows:

aussi en outre en plus	13 errors
dernièrement en dernier lieu enfin en fin de compte finalement	12
à chez dans en	8
concernant de au sujet de sur	6

As with verbs (**M1**) and nouns (**M2**), the frequency of errors noted in this category increased between Y1 and Y2, followed by a fall between Y2 and Y4. This may be because some students become aware in Y2 of the need to structure their exposés, and to situate items and ideas in a clear context, but are unsure how to express these relationships in French.

Form

(4.09 in Y1/2.88 in Y2/2.29 in Y4 per 10 mn; 39.3% of all errors)

F1 Verbs

(.57/.56/.39 per 10 mn; 6.7% of all errors)

Errors in this category can be divided among four sub-sets:

Verb stem (33 errors) Only *bénéficier* and *rencontrer* occurred twice. On the whole, students seem relatively secure in forming verb stems, especially in Y4, by which stage one might expect them to be using a wider range of verbs than in Y1.

Present tense ending (34 errors) All but 6 of these errors involved the alternation between the open syllable ending in the 3rd person singular, and the closed syllable ending in the 3rd person plural, in verbs such as:

/v/ décrire vivre devoir pouvoir savoir promouvoir recevoir
/z/ dire interdire détruire produire
/t/ (se) battre commettre permettre
/s/ définir connaître

In cases such as *détruit/détruisent, se bat/se battent,* it is sometimes difficult, without further questioning, to be sure whether the error arises from ignorance or confusion over the verb ending, or whether the student has simply failed to make the verb agree with its subject (**U2**). In addition, some students are uncertain as to the pronunciation of the verb ending (e.g. *apprend/apprennent*): see above, **4**.

Future, conditional, imperfect ending (17 errors) 9 of these errors involved the alternation between *v, z,* etc. at the start of the final syllable in the imperfect of certain verbs, and the use of *r* in the same position to denote the conditional; 6 of these 9 errors were noted in Y2: this may correspond to increasing use of more complex tense structures, coupled with unfamiliarity with the relevant verb form. Errors may also have arisen from uncertainties involving the meaning and use of the imperfect and/or the conditional.

Compound forms (44 errors) Errors involved choice of the auxiliary *avoir/être* (14 errors), compound tenses of pronominal verbs and passive constructions (14 errors), and the form of the past participle (16 errors, mainly in forms ending with *-t* or *-u*; there was a marked fall from Y1 through Y2 to Y4 in the frequency of errors in this sub-set.

F2 Nouns

(.29/.49/.29 per 10 mn; 4.8% of all errors)

Of the 81 nouns for which errors of formation were noted, *changement, décennie* and *valeur* appeared 3 times, and *atrocités, civils, durée, frontière, leucémie, préjugé* and *psychologue* appeared twice. No attempt was made to distinguish errors in the stem of nouns from suffix errors, but it is clear that the majority involved noun endings; it could be useful to draw students' attention to a certain number of noun endings, and the most common words in which they feature, e.g.:

-ant	*gagnant représentant*
-eur	*pesanteur valeur*
-ogue	*psychologue*
-ée	*durée fumée*
-ment	*changement*
-té	*atrocité*

The pattern of errors noted in this category in each year showed a marked deterioration (the worst recorded in this survey) in Y2, followed by a return in Y4 to the level for Y1. This would suggest that students first of all extend the range of their vocabulary, and that this extended lexicon is in some degree consolidated by increased use and exposure.

F3 Gender of nouns

(.91/.58/.62 per 10 mn; 9.0% of all errors)

Errors noted were evenly divided between masculine nouns wrongly marked as feminine (87 errors) and feminine nouns wrongly marked as masculine (86 errors). Errors of noun gender may to some extent be over-reported: the main indicator of gender for singular nouns is the article, but a few students' pronunciation of the indefinite articles *un, une* consists of the all-purpose /**oune*/. Other students may still be uncertain when using *ce* and *cette*. There may also be some students who have not fully mastered the *du/de la* alternation, and who use one or other of these forms, regardless of the gender of the noun. The nouns most frequently assigned the wrong gender were:

Masculine			
crime	8 errors	*choix*	2 errors
manque	5	*geste*	2
public	5	*groupe*	2
commerce	3	*risque*	2
rôle	3	*siècle*	2
système	3	*trimestre*	2
Feminine			
façon	3 errors	*fin*	2 errors
région	3	*fois*	2
banlieue	2	*guerre*	2
bibliothèque	2	*période*	2
communauté	2		

73 out of 87 errors noted involved masculine nouns ending in *-e*; 32 out of 86 errors involved feminine nouns not ending in *-e*. It may be, therefore, that some students are automatically assigning nouns ending in *-e* to the feminine gender, and even that a few students assign nouns not ending in *-e* to the masculine gender. The absence of any fall in the frequency of errors between Y2 and Y4 suggests that increased exposure to correct forms does not of itself effect a cure.

F4 Adjectives: form and agreement

(1.28/.70/.40 per 10 mn; 9.6% of all errors)

Errors in this category (the second largest in the survey) cannot easily be divided between errors of ending and errors of agreement (see above, **4.**); errors have been grouped into four sub-sets:

-al/-aux (47 errors); ***-el/-elle*** (10 errors) Many of these errors arise from confusion between *-al* and *-el* as suffixes, especially in words such as *superficiel, traditionnel, universel* where in English the suffix is *-al*. More often than not, however, the error involves failure to master a system where the suffix in three cases (*-al, -ale, -ales*) is pronounced /al/, and in one case (*-aux*) it is pronounced /o/. The similarity to English of words such as *normal, principal, social* reinforces students' mental image of these words as 'ending in *-al*'; the improvement by Y4 suggests that increased exposure to specific words and collocations leads to the formulation or consolidation of the correct rule. It is perhaps worth noting that the alternation of /al/ and /o/ is not always correctly applied in the spontaneous speech of francophones.

-s/-se, -x/-se (33 errors); ***-t/-te*** (23 errors) Errors involving *-s/-se, -x/-se* and *-t/-te* can arise from phonology (mute/sounded final consonants), morphology (adjectival suffixes), syntax (adjective agreement), or any combination of these. In this sub-set, errors noted fell sharply between Y1 and Y2; interestingly, in a similar set of exposés (see Nott, 1994), the fall in the rate of errors of pronunciation involving the sounding of final consonants which are normally silent was greatest between Y2 and Y4. It would appear that, for some students, mastery of the adjective agreement rule occurs in the early stages of the degree course, whereas ability to produce correctly silent or sounded final consonants tends to occur later, as a result of greater familiarity with a number of specific words and collocations.

Other adjective suffixes, e.g. *-que, -aire, -ble, -é, -eur* (28 errors) In many of these cases, it would seem to be the lack of equivalence between the English and French forms of the endings of certain adjectives (e.g. *asiatique, cosmopolite, controversé, magnifique, physique*) which causes errors.

Adjective agreement other than the two sub-sets already noted (43 errors) *Beau, nouveau, vieux* accounted for 9 of these errors, together with *-er/-ère* (10 errors), *-if/-ive* (8), *-ain/-aine, -in/-ine* (8), *-teur/-trice* (4). Errors involving *-er/-ère* may be phonological in origin, in the case of the *-if/-ive* alternation, the influence of English is probably at work in words such as *actif, éducatif, explosif.*

F5 Geographical names; use with prepositions

(.57/.29/.30 per 10 mn; 4.8% of all errors)

The fall in errors in this category between Y1 and Y2 may to some extent be accounted for by the fact that exposés in Y2 tended to be on social topics, whereas in Y1 and Y4 there were more exposés on regional or international matters.

Form (including gender) **of geographical nouns and adjectives** (50 errors) Several errors concerned the cardinal points, e.g. *Amérique du Sud, Europe de l'Est, Berlin-Ouest* (8 errors) and *Russie*, confused with *russe* (4 errors). Although some errors in this sub-set could hinder communication with a francophone, English speakers' problems with geographical names and adjectives are more likely to arise from failures of comprehension: with unfamiliar words, particularly adjectives, there can be a failure even to recognise that the word one has heard is indeed 'geographical'.

Use of preposition with geographical names (42 errors) Most errors covered a familiar range: *à* + town/island (8 errors), *au/aux* + masculine name of country (13), *en* + feminine name (6), *dans le* + *county/département* (7), *avec, pour, donner* (etc.) *à* + article + name (5). Some students appear to have over-generalised the rule for *en* + feminine name of country to all names of countries and, in some cases, to names of towns; for others, the use of *dans le* + counties/*départements* is clearly an entirely new concept. The 3-part system in French for the use of prepositions with geographical names (*à; au/aux/en; dans le*) provides valuable clues to non-francophones as to the type of place being referred to, and should receive priority in teaching and learning French before the year abroad.

F6 Adverb phrases

(.49/.26/.31 per 10 mn; 4.4% of all errors)

Apart from adverb forms (7 errors, 4 of which concern *rapidement/vite*), errors in this category involved either the preposition (usually *à, de, en,* but also *avant, dans, entre, par, pendant, pour, sur*) or the noun in the adverb phrase. The two main errors noted involved: *de* + *façon/manière* (11 errors) and *de(s)* + *autre/deux côté(s)* (9 errors). This category covers a broad swathe of phrases in everyday use, which one would expect students to master eventually, after increased exposure to the language. The fall in errors between Y1 and Y2, however, does not continue between Y2 and Y4: do some students, instead of processing these adverb phrases as lexical items, continue to treat them analytically, with the consequent risk of transfer from English?

Use

(3.49 in Y1/3.34 in Y2/2.55 in Y4 per 10 mn; 41.1% of all errors)

U1 Pronominal verbs; verb constructions

(.84/.80/.68 per 10 mn; 10.2% of all errors)

Not surprisingly, this category of error is the largest in the survey; as Pinker (1994) reminds us:

> For a sentence to feel grammatical, the verb's demands must be satisfied. (. . .)

> Because verbs have the power to dictate how a sentence conveys who did what to whom, one cannot sort out the roles in a sentence without looking up the verb. That is why your grammar teacher got it wrong when she told you that the subject of the sentence is the 'doer of the action'. The subject of the sentence is often the doer, but only when the verb says so; the verb can also assign it other roles (. . .). In fact, many verbs have two distinct entries, each casting a different set of roles. (p. 114)

Errors in this category will be examined in four separate sub-sets:

Pronominal verbs (44 errors) These include errors where pronominal verbs are wrongly used as simple verbs, and a few verbs (*collaborer, réagir, récupérer, rompre*) wrongly constructed pronominally. Errors were noted for a total of 30 pronominal verbs and 4 simple verbs, including *se développer* (5 errors) and *se passer* (cp German *passieren*) (2 errors). Several other errors involved cases where a pronominal verb in French corresponds to a simple verb used intransitively in English: *s'accroître, s'adapter, s'améliorer, se concentrer, s'enfuir, se retirer, se révolter, se spécialiser*: students would appear to be making a simple lexical transposition from English to French, without having internalised any rule covering the extensive class of verbs in French which, when used intransitively, are constructed pronominally. A number of errors involving the construction of a pronominal verb with *à/de* have been included in this sub-set: *s'adresser à, se conformer à, s'identifier à, s'intéresser à, s'opposer à; s'approcher de, s'inquiéter de, se moquer de, s'occuper de* (for verb constructions involving simple verbs, see below). Here, too, students appear to be transposing from English.

Impersonal constructions (18 errors, of which only 3 were in Y1)

Most errors involved *il vaut mieux* ('faut' for *vaut*; 'de' added before the infinitive) (6 errors), *il y avait/a eu/aurait eu* ('être' used instead of *avoir*) (4 errors) and *il s'agit/s'agissait de* (impersonal construction not used) (4 errors). For most learners of French, especially in the early years, *il y a* dominates all other impersonal constructions; the group *il y* becomes lexicalised as 'there', sometimes leading to *être* being used instead of *avoir*. The small number of errors noted here reflects the fact that spoken communication is likely to involve fewer impersonal constructions than written communication: *il s'agit de, il (n')est (pas) question de, il vaut/vaudrait mieux*, and the errors associated with them, are more numerous in students' written production.

Verb (and adjective) constructions + noun (63 errors) Errors in this sub-set cover a wide range of constructions, involving a number of different lexical and syntactical rules:

- **verb + direct object** (10 errors) *Aider, approuver, attendre, chercher, écouter, viser*: the rule is often lexical, and there is interference from constructions in English (or German: *aider* + direct object vs *helfen* + dative).
- **verb + *à*** (24 errors) *Demander à, donner à, permettre à*: the failure to internalise the rule '*à* + person' for such verbs is revealed when students attempt to use them in a passive construction. *Accorder, apprendre, fournir* (chose) *à* (personne): here too, the use of such verbs with two objects in French, one direct (usually inanimate) and one indirect (usually animate) gives rise to confusion for anglophones. *Echapper à, jouer à, renoncer à*: students' errors in such constructions often reflect transfer from English, where the lexical rule is different. *Préférer X à Y*: this error may arise from the use of object pronouns, rather than from the construction itself, which is similar in both English and French. *Penser à*: this error arises from confusion with *penser de*, and also from uncertainty in using the construction with object pronouns: *je pense à lui/à elle*, but *j'y pense*.
- **verb + *de*** (11 errors) *Douter de, manquer de; avertir de, dépendre de, parler de; changer*

de: errors here arise from uncertainties about the different constructions possible with a particular verb, and/or from transfer from English.

- **verb + other prepositions** (6 errors) *Monter dans, consister en, considérer comme, utiliser comme, compter sur*: these errors underline the importance of learning and practising certain verbs with the preposition(s) with which they are often constructed. (12 errors with adjective constructions have been included here: *favorable à; différent de* (7 errors), *responsable de; écrit par, intéressé par*.)

Verb (and adjective) constructions + infinitive (71 errors) Errors in this sub set included:

- **verb + (no preposition) + infinitive** (9 errors) *Espérer, oser, paraître, préférer, prétendre, sembler*: faced with constructions which are less familiar and automatic than *il faut* and the common modal verbs, some students seem to feel that *à/de* is required in any verb construction involving an infinitive.
- **verb (phrase) + *à* + infinitive** (18 errors) *Aider* (person) *à, encourager* (person) *à, inviter* (person) *à, chercher à, hésiter à, réussir à; avoir une raison/tendance à, avoir assez/trop de X à, avoir/mettre X ans/du temps à*: constructions such as these are part of the everyday fabric of spoken and written French, but they require considerable dexterity in handling verbs, nouns, pronouns and prepositions.
- **verb (phrase) + *de* + infinitive** (23 errors) *Empêcher* (noun) *de, préférer ... que de; il est/trouver difficile/facile/impossible/ pas question de; avoir le droit/l'habitude/ la responsabilité* etc. *de; c'est à X de*: here too, students are faced with everyday constructions which are syntactically quite complex.
- **verb phrase + *pour* + infinitive** (11 errors): *Etre assez/mieux/trop* + adjective *pour; avoir pas de temps pour; faire* (etc.) *des efforts/une histoire/une méthode pour*: constructions such as these complete the set *à/de/pour* + infinitive; relatively clear guidelines for the choice of preposition can be given to students, but learning does not always lead to acquisition. (9 errors with adjective constructions have been included here: *conditionné à, décidé à, habitué à, prêt à; difficile à; content de, obligé de*.)

U2 Verbs: agreement; infinitive, indicative, subjunctive; inversion; negative constructions

(.50/.691.56 per 10 mn; 8.0% of all errors)

This large category can be divided into five sub-sets:

Agreement of verb with subject (24 errors) One might think that, by the time they enter higher education, all students would have acquired the reflex of making a verb agree with its subject, and in the great majority of cases, this is so. But the 24 errors noted here – half of them in Y4, including several noted between 1993 and 1995 – sound a warning note: the number of tokens is however too small to conclude that such errors are on the increase. Most errors (15) involve 3rd person plural subjects; it may be that some of these errors arise from uncertainties as to verb forms, or even pronunciation, but in many cases, e.g. *avoir, être, aller*, these factors can probably be ruled out.

Use of infinitive (35 errors) This sub-set includes errors ranging from failure to produce the infinitive form after *je veux, on doit, on peut*, etc. (Y1 exclusively, with one exception) to more complex constructions such as *en train de se lever, je me souviens d'avoir . . ., avant de* + infinitive and *en* + present participle (Y2 and Y4 exclusively, with two exceptions). For some students, the adaptability of the infinitive in French seems to constitute a source of confusion.

Use of *que* as conjunction; indicative/subjunctive in subordinate clauses (46 errors) Errors include omission or wrong use of *que* (9), and non-use of indicative (8) or subjunctive (29) in a subordinate clause when normally required in French. Some final year students appear to have developed very little sensitivity to the role of the subjunctive, just as some remain insensitive to the *tu/vous* distinction. 'The subjunctive' looms large in course books, in grammars and in Y1 students' minds: perhaps it would make better sense, pedagogically speaking, to lexicalise the subjunctive, so that students drill and practise it as an automatic feature of clauses following constructions such as the following: *avant que, bien que, à condition que, pour que; aimer que, préférer que, vouloir que; il faut que; important/possible/pas juste que*. Oversensitisation to the subjunctive as a 'problem', rather than as a reflex response to certain linguistic stimuli, may be one reason why some students use it instead of the indicative after *dire* (statement of fact), *espérer, penser, être sûr, c'est un fait que*, and *comme si, même si*.

Inversion of verb and subject (9 errors, none in Y1) Most of these errors occurred in questions – which are unlikely to occur in exposés unless a student asks a rhetorical question, or a genuine question during follow-up discussion.

Negative constructions (38 errors) Errors noted in this sub-set included omission of *pas* (12 errors) and position of *pas* etc., especially in compound tenses (7 errors). Construction of the negative in French generally requires two words in formal situations, and one in informal situations; the omission of *pas* by 12 students suggests that a few have not even begun to master the working rules for a system in which *pas* (or *jamais*, etc.), rather than *ne*, is the dominant marker of the negative.

U3 Tense and aspect

(.29/.26/.24 per 10 mn; 3.4% of all errors)

Errors of tense use mainly involve the system of tenses with *si* (27 errors); errors of aspect concern mainly the use of the imperfect or the passé composé (23 errors).

Constructions with *si* can be conveniently divided into three types:

	errors
Type 1 *Si* + Present, + Future	1
Type 2 *Si* + Imperfect, + Conditional	19
Type 3 *Si* + Pluperfect, + Past conditional	7

Only 4 of these 27 errors were noted in Y1: there would seem to be a clear case for extensive drilling and practice of constructions with *si* in all years of the course, particularly in view of the vital role of this 3-type system in conveying meaning in everyday hypothetical statements.

Constructions with *quand* (6 errors) As with *si*, clear rules for students can be formulated, but in the case of *quand*, these rules diverge from the English pattern: a better understanding of the system of tenses used with *quand* could contribute to students' overall mastery of the tense system in French.

Aspect The frequency of errors in using the imperfect versus the passé composé falls after Y1 but, as with the indicative/subjunctive distinction, it would seem that sensitivity to aspect is still not sufficiently developed in some students, even by Y4. This may be a case where translation from English into French has its place, alongside close study of appropriate passages of written French. Four errors involving tense use with *pendant/depuis* were noted (all in Y1): here too, sensitivity to aspect is useful.

U4 Pronoun use, including relative constructions

(.54/.45/.35 per 10 mn; 5.8% of all errors)

Impersonal pronouns (23 errors) 13 errors involved *c'est* + unmarked adjective versus *il/elle est* + marked adjective, e.g. *c'est beau, ma ville* versus *elle est belle, ma ville*: many students report problems with *c'est* and *il est*: once the 'problem' has been divided into two (*c'est* versus impersonal *il est* and *c'est* versus personal *il/elle est*), and the distinction between *c'est* + adjective + *de/que* and *il est* + adjective + *de/que* has been shown to be stylistic (informal versus formal usage) and not semantic, one is left with *c'est* versus *il/elle est*. Making the distinction between *c'est un(e)* + noun on the one hand, and *il/elle est* + adjective on the other, will help, but an additional notion has to be introduced, which overrides the rule that 'in French an adjective agrees with the noun to which it refers': the use of *c'est* serves to separate the adjective from its noun, so that the idea represented in the adjective becomes the theme of the utterance: *c'est long, les vacances/les vacances, c'est indispensable.*

Clitics and disjunctive pronouns (44 errors) The main errors noted in this sub set were: use of *le/la/les, lui/leur* (13 errors), word order (object clitics) in compound tenses (6 errors), use of *lui/soi/eux-(même(s))* (4 errors) and use of *y/en* (3 errors). For some students, the following (simplified) correspondences between nouns and object pronouns have not been established in their mental grammar of French:

Noun	**Pronoun**
direct object	*le/la/les*
à + noun (animate)	*lui/leur*
à + noun (inanimate)	*y*
de + noun (inanimate)	*en*
de + noun (animate)	*de + lui/elle/eux/elles*
other preposition + noun	preposition + *lui/elle* etc.

Unless the above links between noun and pronoun use are made explicit, students may find that they can become word-perfect while at the computer console, but remain tongue-tied and uncertain when communicating 'for real': 'pareillement au savoir qui ne mène pas forcément au savoir-faire, la technologie n'aboutit pas à la parole. Un didacticiel n'exerce pas de compétence de sens' (Namenwirth, 1994, p. 277).

Relative constructions (43 errors) The main errors in this sub-set involved *dont* (use of pronoun, word order, etc.) (11 errors), *l'époque/une fois/quelque chose* etc. *où* (8 errors) and (*tout*) *ce qui/ce que/ce dont* (7 errors). For learners of French, as for many francophones, *dont* gives rise to non-standard utterances such as */c'est pas quelque chose qu'ils ont besoin/*, whereas a student who has not mastered constructions involving *de* + relative pronoun, is likely to say */*ce n'est pas quelque chose qu'il a besoin de/*. In addition to *dont*, priorities for learners of French include the use of *où* as a relative pronoun, and of *ce qui/ce que* as opposed to *qui/que*.

U5 Determiners; noun + noun

(.52/.47/.35 per 10 mn; 5.8% of all errors)

Use of articles, demonstrative and possessive adjectives (51 errors) The two main errors in this sub-set were *du/des, au/aux* (not 'de le' etc.) (12 errors, none in Y4) and *d'autres* + noun (not 'des') (11 errors, 2 in Y1). *D'autres*, which in French is lexicalised as a quantifier, is still analysed by some students in Y4 as indefinite article + adjective/noun. In other respects, the use of articles is generally well mastered, even though, to judge from some students' written production in Y1, *les* and *des* are not always felt to be functionally different.

Noun + *de* + noun (62 errors) Included in this sub-set are errors in structures such as *quelque chose de différent, rien d'intéressant.* Apart from 8 errors where a definite or indefinite article was mistakenly added after *de* in phrases such as *un manque d'espaces verts, un groupe d'enfants, 53% de matière grasse, des vêtements d'homme, une serveuse de bar, aux heures de pointe*, 40 errors involved the reduction of *du/de la/des* to *de* in phrases such as *l'idee de la mort, la crise du pétrole, au début du siècle, 62% des Français, une photo des jardins*. The ways in which the two nouns are linked are often subtly different; an approximate guide, in perhaps 80–90% of cases, is to look at the article used with the first noun: *le/la/les* + noun + *du/de la/des* + noun; *un/une/des* + noun + *de*+ noun. But there are exceptions, e.g. *aux heures de pointe* and *une photo des jardins.* A second check for students would be to decide whether the second noun is being used adjectivally, as in *aux heures de pointe*, or whether it is part of the picture in its own right, as in *une photo des jardins*. Is it worth trying to improve on performance in this sub-set, at the expense of more pressing problems?

U6 Quantifiers; Numerals

(.57/.41/.27 per 10 mn; 5.3% of all errors)

Quantifiers (72 errors) The main errors noted in this sub-set were: *beaucoup/pas mal/moins/plus/trop de* + noun (29 errors), *pas de* + noun (8 errors), *plus de/davantage de* + noun (8 errors) and *la plupart des/la plus grande partie de* etc. + noun (7 errors). These errors are among the most familiar of all to every teacher of French. Many students in

Yl admit to being confused by the system of determiners and quantifiers in French – not that they put it in precisely these terms. Two or three rules often have to be applied at the same time, and it is essential to grasp these rules *consecutively* in order to apply them with success *simultaneously*:

- step 1: meaning and use of definite, indefinite and partitive articles;
- step 2: how articles combine with *à* and *de*;
- step 3: how, when *de* combines with *du/de la/des*, the result must be *DE*;
- step 4: application of these rules in various situations, including noun + *de* + noun (see **U5** above).

Numerals (29 errors) The two main errors noted in this sub-set were: numbers between 60 and 99 (6 errors) and word order: *les deux dernières* + noun (5 errors). All learners of a foreign language realise sooner or later that mastery of numerals takes time and requires practice outside the language classroom. The fall in the frequency of error in this sub-set between Y2 and Y4 is in keeping with this observation.

U7 Comparison

(.23/.271.12 per 10 mn; 2.7% of all errors)

Included in this category were 11 errors involving the use of *bon, bien, mauvais, mal*. Among comparative constructions, the main types of error were: use of *que* (not 'de') after *meilleur, plus, plus* + adjective etc. (6 errors), confusion between *meilleur* and *mieux* (4 errors), *aussi bien que, aussi bien X que Y* (4 errors) and use of *différent, supérieur* etc. (without 'plus') (3 errors). Among superlative constructions: *les* + noun + *les plus/moins* (repetition of article) (5 errors), confusion between *le meilleur* and *le mieux* (2 errors) and le pire (without 'plus') (2 errors). One group of items stands out as the source of several errors: *mauvais/mal* and, in both comparative and superlative constructions, *(le) meilleur/(le) mieux*. Perhaps it is on this small but very productive group of words that students' attention should be concentrated. Even francophone children go through the stage of saying */*plus meilleur/*, and */*plus mieux/* is said jocularly by francophone adults.

8. Implications for teaching

Meaning Any student of French as a second language is well advised to pay due attention to synonyms, *faux amis*, the appropriate use of adverbs and adverb phrases, and so on; but the overall frequency of errors of meaning noted in this survey (just over one noted every seven minutes) suggests that students were, on the whole, very successful in choosing and combining words to convey meaning in their exposés.

Form Errors of form often have little direct effect on the communication of meaning, although if they are numerous and unpredictable, they will tend to draw the listener's attention away from the intended message and towards the form of its expression, thus impairing communication. Attention to *form*, on the part of the student of French, may therefore be rewarded in terms of increased *acceptability* of the message being conveyed. Errors in the form of nouns (including geographical names) and of adverb phrases, for example, may sometimes be such as to confuse or baffle the listener (particularly non English-speaking listeners?) as to the meaning of what is being said.

Use Many of the most frequently-occurring errors of language use have little or no effect on the communication of meaning: verb constructions with following nouns or infinitives, use of *de* or *des* etc. between two nouns; even, in most cases, errors involving pronominal verbs, negative constructions and appropriate use of subjunctive or indicative forms of the verb. Errors of language use become more important for the communication of meaning, however, in the case of the use of tenses with *si*, the choice of the imperfect or the passé composé to indicate aspect, or the ability to use correctly the object forms of clitic pronouns.

Logistics and finance dictate that students be taught in year groups, or sub-groups of year groups. The interests of a ML department as a cohesive learning community, where the whole is greater than the sum of individual students and teachers, further suggest that all students in a given year (and in particular in Y1) should have access to the same range of input material and of language processing and practice activities. However, the wide variations in students' progress and performance reflect the highly individual and personal nature of FL learning, which should be taken into account when devising and conducting unassessed classwork and assessed coursework: within the overall syllabus, the topic, scope and form of individual (and group) oral and written assignments should be negotiated with and among the students concerned, so that their progress in FL learning and acquisition, and the development of their personal and sociocultural interests, combine to reinforce one another.

The role of the teacher is thus primarily to provide and if necessary animate individual, group and whole-class activities which motivate students to stretch their use of the FL beyond what it was before. In the course of these activities, students will, inevitably, make errors of various kinds; some of these can be noted quietly by the teacher, and used later as the basis for class, group or individual explanation and practice. In addition, students need to be trained in self-diagnosis, so that they can make knowledge of ignorance the first step towards improvement of performance. In particular, any feedback to individual students on their FL performance should be hierarchised in terms of the relative importance of certain errors and types of error, with the emphasis on making the most of their own personal and linguistic strengths: FL teaching should never be solely, or even primarily, concerned with the avoidance of error.

Lastly, we need to be modest – as well as clear and precise – about our objectives: FL teaching can assist students' progress, but no techniques, however perfected, tested or inspected, can guarantee to produce all-round improvement among students. The concept of 'native speaker competence', if it means to students that they are expected to speak or write like Jaurès or de Gaulle, is a damaging illusion, and should be abandoned. A more meaningful point of comparison is each student's competence in his/her own language – so long as it is understood that one of the aims of a ML course in HE in the UK is to enable students to become more articulate in English, as well as in one or more FLs.

9. Implications for research

While it is interesting, and may be useful, to examine data gathered from students who are carrying out a task which forms part of their actual programme of practice and assessment in spoken French, evaluation of the effectiveness of FL teaching and learning in HE, including the Year Abroad, calls for a substantial programme of research projects of various kinds, involving combinations of elements such as:

- detailed case studies of a small number of students whose 'progress' is monitored at several stages during the 4-year course;
- comparative studies of matched cohorts of students who are following courses with broadly similar aims, but with different organisational features and teaching/learning methodologies;
- identification of specific features of FL competence: phonological (e.g. stress patterns), lexical (e.g. abstract vocabulary), morphological (e.g. geographical adjectives) and syntactical (e.g. expression of conditional), and investigation of how, when and whether these are acquired;
- comparison of students' FL performance (e.g. fluency, vocabulary) with their performance in their own language, at various stages of the degree course;
- surveys of ML graduates 5 or 10 years after graduation, not only to build up a picture of the ways and the extent to which they use their language(s) in their personal, sociocultural and professional life, but also to investigate which areas of their ML course have enhanced their life in these spheres, and which areas they now consider to have been neglected, or unduly emphasised, during their ML degree course.

Research projects which cover some of the above areas are described in Freed (1991), Milton and Meara (1995), Opper *et al* (1990), Towell (1994) and Towell *et al* (1996). Towell et al (1996), in particular, highlight evidence that progress, measured in terms of fluency gains during the year abroad, is often greater among students whose original level of proficiency was relatively low, than among those whose proficiency was relatively high; this, they suggest, is in part because for some students a high pre-Year Abroad level of fluency was achieved through French speech based on English speech patterns, which then had to be un-learned, and replaced by more French patterns, whereas some students whose fluency had been relatively low, improve by adopting French speech patterns without having to discard English patterns.

These and other studies of FL teaching, learning and acquisition in HE provide valuable insights into aspects of our work, as teachers and course designers, which have for too long remained prisoners of inertia (sometimes called 'tradition') and received ideas (sometimes called 'experience'). As yet, however, they have not reached a 'critical mass' which would be sufficient to provide customers and users of ML courses in HE with *evidence* for the benefits – linguistic and otherwise – of certain time-consuming and expensive activities. For example, most ML students and teachers, including myself, sing the praises of the Year Abroad, and adduce copious anecdotal evidence in its favour: but can we demonstrate what those benefits actually are, how and in what circumstances they are acquired, and to what extent they arise specifically from a year abroad, as opposed to, say, work experience and/or an intensive language course in the UK?

10. Conclusion

Since all learners have their own interlanguage, and therefore make linguistic errors for different combinations of reasons, it is unlikely that one French language course, manual or tutor can answer each student's needs. Once a student has reached a certain threshold in FL competence and performance, it becomes more important for that student to give priority to making progress in non-linguistic areas of development: personal, cultural, vocational. The difficulties of learning a foreign *language* pale into insignificance beside all that is involved in understanding, adapting to, and retaining one's own identity in, a foreign *culture*.

On this score, it is time that we, as modern linguists, came clean about our own agenda. If our view of our discipline corresponds to what Evans (1988) states in the case of the Year Abroad, namely that 'The experience is so formative because it involves basic issues of identity' (p. 48) and that 'The awareness that "they do things differently over there" is the cultural equivalent of the earlier linguistic discovery that languages are codes. Cultures are seen to be codes as well' (p. 46) – if, then, we are committed to offering all our students the opportunity to experience, as we ourselves did, cultural relativity, without loss of personal or national identity (leaving aside those of our number who still find it necessary to dislike and/or to fear 'the Germans', or to declare that they 'can't stand the French') we are going to have to defend and illustrate our activity in the face of those whose agenda is different from our own, many of whom regard themselves as non-linguists, or failed linguists, thanks in part to their experience of the ML tradition referred to earlier. In January 1996, it was a German, not a British head of government who shed tears at the Requiem Mass for Mitterrand and his role in the construction of Europe: whose job is it, in the UK, to ensure that there will not be a Requiem Mass for Europe? Action: ALL (sans jeu de mots).

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In future issues of *Francophonie* it is intended to give special emphasis to a number of topics which will be of interest and relevance to readers. Amongst these topics will figure such issues as:

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All readers are urged to consider writing something on any of the above topics. Articles of 1000 to 3000 words which express aspirations or suggestions for a successful outcome will be welcomed by the Editor. Pupil/student contributions will be very welcome. If in doubt please discuss proposals with the Editor who will be very happy to explore any suggestion with you. In addition we shall continue to welcome articles on language, literature and institutions as in the past.

Alan Smalley
Editor

Diagnostic Testing: The Humberside Solution

Chantal Gervais
University of Humberside

Last academic year, I designed a diagnostic test in French to enable students to be placed accurately in their language groups *from the start* when they join the University. The test was piloted twice last year and altered in view of students' feedback and results. Its purpose is to determine whether students need to be placed in a post 'A' Level group or post G.C.S.E. group. The third version of the test was administered this term and this brief article sets out my findings.

1 – Why diagnostic tests?

Until now, when students joined the University, they were placed in levels according to their prior qualifications in languages. (Languages are taught here in levels which up to now have been: *ab initio*, *'faux-débutants'*, post G.C.S.E. and post 'A'). This means that reliance was placed on qualifications obtained one, two, four years ago, if not longer. However, students may be better or worse than their qualifications on paper suggest. They might have spent time abroad or indeed, they might not have had any exposure to the foreign language in the intervening period.

Although the diagnostic test I shall be referring to is to determine whether Foundation Level students ought to be in a post 'A' Level or post G.C.S.E. group, it is interesting to note that the case of students without formal qualifications, although *à priori* easy to categorise as they should come under the umbrella of the *ab initio* grouping is in fact far from straightforward. Students will often claim that they do not know anything but this is often not the case. And so these students also need to be tested and might end up in the *faux-débutants* grouping.

The difficulty of assessing the meaning of prior qualifications must be set against the need for students to be placed in the right group for their ability. It is indeed extremely important for students to be placed in the correct language group **from the start** so that they do not feel demotivated. If they find that the work is not pitched at the right level for them, they will often take the option of not attending their classes either because they feel the work is not challenging enough or that it is far too demanding. Being first year students (and this also includes mature students), they often lack the confidence to come and talk to lecturers and, unfortunately, once they start dropping out of seminars, it becomes endemic.

As qualifications at point of entry proliferate, it is becoming increasingly difficult to know with certainty which level is most appropriate for students. These days, students come to us with varied experiences, in addition to the standard background of G.C.S.E. and 'A' Level:

> i.e. failed 'A' Levels, BTEC, AS Level, GNVQ, mature students, students without formal qualifications but who have spent some time abroad.

The possibility of flexible groupings might provide an answer to the problem of incorrect initial group placement but this is not an ideal situation. It causes disruption in students' learning experience. For instance, they will have to re-adjust to the new level of work, they will of course have missed some of the work (which will add to their anxiety) and last but not least, they will join a group which already has its own dynamics. It is therefore important to get it right from the start especially as there are only 12 teaching weeks in each semester. It makes it therefore of paramount importance that the teaching programme and assessments meet students' needs from the start of the course; students cannot afford to lose out as they have so little time.

2 – Considerations influencing the design of the test

1 – The first difficulty was to assess what students study these days as part of their 'A' Level programme. Schools have had to undertake recent changes very often including reduction in taught hours with obvious consequences on the syllabus. I contacted 'A' Level teachers and language advisers. My main conclusions are that grammar is certainly not covered to the extent it used to be only five years ago when I was involved in teaching at that level and more emphasis is being placed on students' independent learning. G.C.S.E. language programmes still emphasize communicative practical everyday situations although as the National Curriculum works through to Key Stage 4, they are set to change in 1996. (For example, greater use of the foreign language in the classroom and in assessments).

2 – I also wanted the test to be computerised. It would simplify the whole nature of the assessment as students themselves could access the test individually and independently. The marking would also be more efficiently done. I am in the process of negotiating with our IT team as to what I can reasonably expect the software to do. I am resisting the over-use of multiple-choice type of questions as, although this kind of testing can indeed be used justifiably and I have made use of it, it should not limit us. The IT staff are being very helpful and are looking into other more flexible ways of assessing languages.

3 – The test as designed at present assesses students' existing grammatical knowledge, reading skills and vocabulary. It does not test their listening and oral skills. These current limits are for technical reasons and I look forward to adding these skills as our know-how increases.

4 – The test ought to be administered in the first week of the semester. However, I am worried that some students may perform badly for reasons such as dyslexia, poor test skills or personal reasons of which we are unaware. *The test should not therefore be an end in itself and students should be qiven the opportunity to discuss their performance.* Although computers are an invaluable help, human contact is essential and cannot be replaced.

3 – Conditions in which the test was administered and students' profile

61 students took the test (third and final version) in week 4 of semester 1, i.e. week commencing 16 October 95. I administered the test on 4 groups and a colleague did it with her own group of students.

The test was 50 minutes long and students had no access to a dictionary. We also ask students after the test to write comments if they wish. These are part of section 6.

All 61 students had been placed in Year 1, post 'A' Level. Students' prior qualifications were:

'A' Level, grade A: 2 students (1 a native speaker).
" " " B: 2 (1 with French mother)
" " " C: 8 (1 with French mother)
" " " D: 26 (1 took examination in 1992, 2 in 1994 and have not done French since, 1 spent last year in Bordeaux).
" " " E: 16 (1 spent last year in France, 1 has not done French for 1 year).
" " " U: 1
" " " N: 4
Scottish Higher A: 1
Irish Leaving Certificate Honours Level D: 1

This list highlights the spread of students' past experience and shows how relying on prior qualifications only, can no longer give an accurate picture of students' level of linguistic achievement. Furthermore, syllabuses are varied and it is essential to assess students' strengths and weaknesses according to a common determinator.

A control group of 5 post G.C.S.E. students took the test at a later date (week 7).

Students were given a text of approximately 600 words and the first exercise consisted of familiarising the students with its content while working on grammar. For instance, verbs were given in the text in the infinitive with an indication of the tense to be used and students had to give the correct form of the verb. Pronouns, inifinitive constructions and adjectives were also tested in this contextualised manner. It meant that students spent an average of 20 minutes on this section and as they had to read the text several times, they were then ready to tackle sections 2 and 3 which tested their vocabulary and understanding of the text.

4 – Overall results

(Students were *not* penalised for missing/wrong accents.)

SECTION ONE: GRAMMAR SECTION
32 questions, mark/16

Figures below indicate number of correct answers obtained by the 61 'A' Level students:

a) VERBS:

	Number of correct student responses
1 – voit	51
2 – s'est mis	20
3 – faut	33
4 – sont sortis	26
5 – a eu	36
6 – s'agit	54
7 – a dû	35
8 – lu	40
9 – a décidé	48
10 – prendra	40
11 – sait	42
12 – pouvait	41
13 – font	35
14 – ont perdu	37
15 – a ouvert	25
16 – vont	43

b) PRONOUNS: Students were asked to insert a pronoun in the text (either le/la/l'/les/lui or leur).

17 – la	36
18 – lui	24
19 – lui	46

(For the sake of clarity, I have included where appropriate the context in which the particular exercise was set.

17 – il la suivra en permanence.
18 – Cela lui permet donc . . . .
19 – . . . on se moquait de lui).

c) INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS: Students were reminded that verbs take the prepositions à, de/d' or nothing when they introduce an infinitive. They were given some examples to make this more explicit. Their task required them to add the correct preposition after the verb.

	Number of correct student responses
20 – de	39
21 – à	38
22 –	35
23 – de	28

(Put in context:

20 – . . . son épouse décide de . . .
21 – Il lui faut aussi apprendre à . . .
22 – Le Canard a dû --- arrêter . . .
23 – Cela lui permet donc de . . .).

d) RELATIVE PRONOUNS: Students were asked to insert either qui/que/qu'/ce qui or ce que.

	Number of correct student responses
24 – qu'	50
25 – qui	39
26 – qui	21
27 – que	43
28 – ce que	3[illegible]

(Put in context:

24 – . . . sauf celle qu'il se fait . . .
25 – . . . c'est un des journaux qui se porte . . .
26 – . . . un pourcentage de bénéfice qui dépasse . . .
27 – Chacun sait en effet, que la presse . . .
28 – . . . voilà par exemple ce que le public . . .).

e) ADJECTIVES: Students had to identify 4 adjectives in the text which were incorrectly spelt as they were in the masculine singular.

	Number of correct student responses
29 – soumise	3
30 – nombreuse	5
31 – officielle	28
32 – française	19

SECTION TWO: VOCABULARY

14 questions, mark/14

a) The first 7 questions were multiple-choice. Students were given the French expressions below with an indication of where they were to be found in the text. They were also given for each one a choice of 4 possible meanings in English and had to choose the correct one. (The point of the exercise was not so much to test their vocabulary knowledge but rather to test their ability to understand the gist of a passage. The expressions given were difficult and students often had to deduce their meaning from the context.)

1 – son épouse	47
2 – le bourrage des crânes	29
3 – être à contre-courant	55
4 – hebdomadaire	33
5 – il fait rire jaune	44
6 – il se porte très bien	41
7 – il a annoncé la couleur	41

b) Students were given the 7 expressions below:

8 – il a été créé
9 – sans beaucoup d'argent
10 – dès le commencement
11 – des actualités
12 – un pionnier
13 – en ce temps-là
14 – célèbre

Their task was to find their equivalent in the text. The following answers were accepted:

8 – il a été fondé **or** a été fondé **or** été fondé
9 – avec des moyens dérisoires **or** des moyens dérisoires
10 – dès le début **or** dès sa naissance
11 – des nouvelles
12 – un précurseur
13 – à l'époque
14 – fameux

The results for section b were as follows:

8 – 22
9 – 30
10 – 41
11 – 25
12 – 18
13 – 19
14 – 35

SECTION THREE: COMPREHENSION

10 questions, mark/10

In this section, students were given statements in French referring to the text and they had to decide whether they were true or false.

I will only communicate the results in this instance as, short of giving the whole text, I cannot make this section more explicit to the reader.

1 – T	55
2 – T	36
3 – F	49
4 – F	27
5 – F	17
6 – T	37
7 – F	43
8 – T	26
9 – T	29
10 – T	43

5 – Results by levels

The total mark for the test was 40.

The three marks given in brackets refer to section 1 (grammar/16), section 2 (vocabulary/14) and section 3 (comprehension/10).

'A' Level, grade A:

37,5 (15,5 + 13 + 9)	(Belgian student; as a matter of interest, answers wrong were: q.5 'a eut', q.14 'politique' instead of 'fameux', q.2 'false' instead of 'true'.
31 (12 + 10 + 9)	

'A' Level, grade B:
34,5 (12,5 + 13 + 9)
28,5 (Mother is French)

'A' Level, grade C:
35,5 (11,5 + 14 + 10)
30,5 (11,5 + 10 + 9)
25 (12 + 10 + 3)
23,5 (10,5 + 4 + 9)
23 (11 + 9 + 3)
21,5 (Mother is French)
20,5 (12,5 + 6 + 2)
15,5 (9,5 + 6 + 0) This student did not finish her paper. She recognised that her exam techniques were poor and time management was something she needed to improve. I was able to assess that her command of spoken French was very good, she had a wide vocabulary and her grammar was sound. She was definitely in the right group.

'A' Level, grade D:
32 (13 + 11 + 8) (1 year in Bordeaux since taking A Level).
28,5 (9,5 + 11 + 8)
28,5 (9,5 + 12 + 7)
28,5 (7,5 + 12 + 9) (Also did Business French AS Level, grade B)
28 (12 + 10 + 6)
28 (9 + 12 + 7) (Not done French for a year)
27,5 (8,5 + 10 + 9)
27,5 (10,5 + 9 + 8)
27 (9 + 9 + 9)
26,5 (10,5 + 8 + 8)
26,5 (9,5 + 10 + 7)
26 (11 + 7 + 8)
24 (8 + 7 + 9)
23 (11 + 9 + 3)
22,5 (11,5 + 4 + 7)
22 (6 + 8 + 8)
22 (7 + 9 + 6)
21,5 (4,5 + 10 + 7) (A Level taken in 1992)
21,5 (7,5 + 7 + 7)
21 (4 + 10 + 7) (Taken in 94)
20,5 (9,5 + 4 + 7)
20 (11 + 9 + 0)
17 (8 + 5 + 4)
16,5 (8,5 + 4 + 4)
16 (8 + 4 + 4)
14,5 (11,5 + 3 + 0) (This student did not have time to attempt the last section).

'A' Level, grade E:
27 (11 + 9 + 7)
26,5 (10,5 + 10 + 6) (Last year in France)
25,5 (10,5 + 8 + 7)
25 (10 + 8 + 7)
24 (7 + 11 + 6)
24 (8 + 10 + 6)
23 (16 + 8 + 7) (Not done French for a year)
22,5 (8,5 + 8 + 6)
22 (10 + 6 + 6)
21 (12 + 9 + 0)
21 (11 + 5 + 5)
20,5 (9,5 + 8 + 3)
20 (9 + 6 + 5)
18,5 (7,5 + 6 + 5)
15,5 (5,5 + 6 + 4)
12 (7 + 2 + 3)

'A' Level, grade N:
19 (9 + 5 + 5)
17 (3 + 7 + 7)
16 (7 + 3 + 6)
15,5

'A' Level, grade U:
20 (7 + 4 + 9) ('A' Level taken in 1994; this student has been attending evening classes for the last year).

Scottish Higher A:
19,5 (9,5 + 6 + 4)

Irish Cert. D:
13,5 (Worried at beginning of term as felt should be in G.C.S.E. She has now transferred to a post G.C.S.E. group and is enjoying her studies).

The test was also administered on 5 post G.C.S.E. students:

G.C.S.E. grade A:
24,5 (8,5 + 11 + 5)
23,5 (8,5 + 7 + 8)
18 (8 + 8 + 2)

G.C.S.E. grade B:
9,5 (1,5 + 5 + 3)
8 (3 + 2 + 3)

6 – Students' feedback

I enclose some of the students' comments they wrote immediately after having done the test. They were not at this stage aware of their results. (It is worth mentioning that I did not come across any negative feedback. They all had something positive to say about the test and a lot of students commented on its usefulness. They tended to feel that they had performed badly).

> 'I don't think I did very well in the grammar section. I know this is one of my weakest points so I found this very difficult. I understood the text and Section 2 and 3 weren't as bad. However, I still don't think I did very well as I am not good in a test condition. I prefer to take my time over work and get it right that way.' **(Scored 21/40).**

> 'I think that most of the test was OK but the section on filling in the equivalent meanings was a bit harder, because some of the phrases I hadn't come across before'. **(Scored 26.5/40).**

'Some vocabulary I didn't understand but after reading it a few times plus answering the questions it wasn't too bad'. **(Scored 22/40).**

'I found the verb section quite difficult to do and I realise that I will have to do more work on learning these. However, I found the test quite useful.' **(Scored 25/40).**

'I found this exercise useful as now I know what I have to concentrate upon.' **(Scored 28/40).**

'I thought it was interesting but the one problem was that I was a bit rushed and didn't finish it. Because I rushed it I think I've done terribly! Panic! I think it's useful to see how much I know/can remember so I'll be able to work on it.' **(Scored 20/40).**

'A good test – a good length.' **(Scored 30.5/40).**

'Not enough time was given for the test. Another 10 minutes would have helped'. **(Scored 14.5/40).**

'Varying degrees of difficulty mean that this is on the whole a good test of post 'A' Level ability. However, I feel that the Questions should be separated from the text for simplicity.' **(Scored 18.5/40).**

'In general, I managed to understand the text and by becoming more familiar with French, I hope to show some improvement in future exercises.' **(Scored 19/40).**

7 – Comments

The test was particularly useful for the following reasons:

a) It gave students an indication of what was expected at this level very early on. When students first come to University, not only have they to cope with a new physical environment, the teaching and learning is also set according to parameters to which they are unaccustomed. The test clarifies the demands which are going to be made on them: e.g. Tasks performed under time-constraints in order to develop useful time-management skills particularly relevant in employment, sound grasp of basic grammar, ability to process a lot of information and extract the relevant details.

b) It increased their confidence as most of them felt very weak in grammar in particular. They had generally achieved higher scores than anticipated. It is important to give students almost immediate feedback on their performance in order to encourage them and help them to realise they are at the right level. Feedback in this case was given to students within a week.

c) It gave students and tutors an early indication of specific areas which needed to be looked at in detail. During the feedback session, students were encouraged to discuss their performance with one another and to explain in detail which areas in particular they had found difficult. It became a 'grammar demystification' session and it helped to remove some of the terror students seem to feel about grammar.

d) In the light of the results obtained, it is apparent that the differentiation at 'A' Level between grades C-D and D-E is not enormous.

e) Section 2, first 7 questions testing students' ability to get the gist of the passage was particularly well done although the vocabulary given was difficult. Students were used to this kind of exercise and have acquired the skill of working out the gist of a written passage.

f) Students should achieve a minimum score of 16/40 (i.e. 40%) in order to be in an 'A' Level group. It is interesting to note that the three post G.C.S.E. students performed well in the test. Two students decided to move to the 'A' Level group as they had felt (prior to the test) that they would benefit by being in a more advanced group. Students who did not quite reach the pass mark (i.e. 15.5; 14.5) decided to stay in the 'A' Level group but a plan of action was agreed so that students were to work on specific areas.

g) It is unrealistic to expect students with straightforward post G.C.S.E. grades B and below to do well in the test. However, I intend to trial the test with more post G.C.S.E. grade A students as the sample used was in retrospect limited.

8 – Conclusions

The test is beneficial to all students (with the appropriate background in French studies) for the reasons mentioned in section 7 (a–c).

The feedback session is of paramount importance. It needs to be immediate and comprehensive.

No transfers from one group to another should be done without discussing the reasons with students first. As mentioned in section 2, students might have underachieved because of a special set of circumstances.

The test is not questioning the validity of 'A' Level. Students with an 'A' Level qualification should rightly be in an advanced group.

The test is a valuable indicator for placing students with an unusual background in an appropriate group. Also, the test can provide evidence of ability when students think they have been misplaced or, as sometimes happens, when they feel the work is too hard or too easy.

I should be grateful to hear from anybody who has worked on this area as sharing ideas and common experience is always enriching. The work I have done has been difficult and time-consuming but what kept me going was the positive feedback I received from students.

Inservice courses for teachers and lecturers 1996 from the Association for Language Learning

Title	Date	Venue
Comenius Funding Course	24 June	Leicester
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Italian Weekend	4-6 October	Oxford
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Russian Day	11-12 October	Birmingham
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Comment utiliser une énigme policière pour développer les facultés d'expression orale de nos élèves

Patrick Blanche L'université privée de
Kumamoto (Japon)

Introduction

Au niveau 'moyen', nos élèves n'ont encore guère l'occasion de s'entraîner à parler français au cours de discussions (en partie) 'libres' d'une manière qui leur permette vraiment de s'améliorer. Leur donner réellement et régulièrement, en classe, la possibilité de développer eux-mêmes leurs facultés d'expression orale me semble donc être un objectif pédagogique valable.

Parmi les types d'exercices que j'emploie dans ce but, je voudrais en décrire un qui m'a toujours donné beaucoup de satisfaction. Je l'ai fait faire maintes fois par des groupes de grandeurs et de compositions différentes au Canada, aux États-Unis, en France, en Grande-Bretagne et au Japon.

Les élèves, étudiants ou 'stagiaires' doivent travailler ensemble pour résoudre une petite énigme policière. Les renseigements nécessaires (que, par la suite, j'appellerai aussi 'indices') leurs sont fournis, mais chaque personne n'en obtient qu'un nombre limité. Et comme tous les indices ont de l'importance, tout le monde est obligé de participer à la tâche commune.

Je commencerai par expliquer la démarche à suivre, quelle que soit l'énigme policière utilisée. Je donnerai ensuite un exemple concret: celui d'une énigme dont je me suis servi à plusieurs reprises, et dans des contextes très différents, pour enseigner le français langue étrangère. Et puis, finalement, je mentionnerai plusieurs structures et fonctions du langage dont le bon emploi peut être facilité par des exercices de ce genre.

Démarche à suivre

Préparation

Choisir (ou écrire soi-même) une histoire 'plausible' qui ne soit ni trop simple ni trop compliquée. Penser à tous les détails. Au besoin, faire un tableau chronologique montrant où chaque personnage se trouve à certains moments. Préparer une liste d'indices, en s'arrangeant pour qu'ils aient tous à peu près la même importance. Si un indice repose sur un mensonge, il doit être infirmé par une autre donnée. Quand la liste est complète, l'essayer sur des locuteurs natifs: ceci pour vérifier que l'énigme peut être effectivement résolue avec l'ensemble des renseignements fournis.

Une fois la liste validée, écrire tous les indices sur des fiches, si possible un seul par fiche, Mélanger les fiches (pour séparer les données appartenant à une même catégorie d'information), puis les numéroter.

En classe

(a) Expliquer d'abord aux apprenants en quoi leur tâche consiste: trouver l'heure et le lieu d'un délit, en reconnaître l'auteur (ou les auteurs) *et* découvrir ses (ou leurs) *mobiles*.

(b) Juste avant de distribuer les fiches aux élèves, leur expliquer les 'règles du jeu':
- il est interdit à quiconque de recopier le texte rédigé sur ses fiches ou celles d'un(e) camarade;
- il est interdit à quiconque de lire ce qui est écrit sur les fiches d'un(e) camarade;
- les renseignements donnés à chacun

ne pourront être échangés qu'oralement;
- ces renseignements pourront d'ailleurs être lus à haute voix, autant de fois qu'il le faudra, par ceux ou celles à qui ils auront été donnés;
- [pour les groupes dont le niveau est assez faible] il sera seulement permis à une personne, élue (ou nommée) 'secrétaire', de prendre des notes – *à condition* que la prise de notes ne soit pas du recopiage;
- les fiches ne pourront pas être conservées par les apprenants: elles seront ramassées au bout d'une trentaine de minutes;
- toutefois, les mêmes fiches (portant les mêmes numéros[1]) leur seront redistribuées au cours de la prochaine séance, puis seront de nouveau ramassées après trente ou quarante minutes, et ainsi de suite, jusqu'à ce que l'intrigue soit démêlée.

(c) Demander aux élèves d'elire un(e) 'président(e)', un(e) 'vice-président(e)' et, éventuellement [pour les groupes dont le niveau est assez faible], un(e) 'secrétaire'.[2] Le(la) président(e) sera chargé(e) d'*organiser* les *échanges d'information* d'une manière très *efficace*.

(d) Donner à chaque élève un nombre égal de fiches. Si le nombre total des fiches n'est pas divisible par le nombre des participants, donner une ou deux fiches supplémentaires aux meilleurs élèves, ou bien une ou deux fiches en moins au(à la) president(e), au(à la) vice-président(e) et, éventuellement, au(à la) secrétaire.[3]

(e) Dire aux apprenants de lire leurs fiches en silence, de relever les mots et expressions qu'ils ne comprennent pas ou dont ils ne sont pas sûrs, puis de vous en demander la signification à tour de rôle.

(f) Leur dire aussi de faire très attention à vos explications, car vous ne les répéterez pas. Les prévenir à ce moment-là que vous n'interviendrez pratiquement plus pendant les trente ou quarante minutes à venir, car la solution de l'énigme est *leur* responsabilité et non la vôtre. Leur préciser que vous vous contenterez de les observer, de les écouter, de prendre des notes, et de faire quelques remarques concernant leur utilisation de la langue à la fin de chaque séance.

(g) Donc *ne pas corriger* les erreurs de vocabulaire et les fautes de prononciation ou de grammaire, même si elles sont sérieuses, *au cours* des séances – *à moins* qu'elles ne risquent de compromettre le déroulement de l'activité.

Corriger les fautes qui paraissent les plus graves seulement *à la fin* de chaque séance (après avoir ramassé les fiches): sept ou huit minutes devraient suffire[4] pour cela. Dire alors aux apprenants s'ils sont ou ne sont pas 'sur la bonne piste'.

Exemple: *L'affaire De la Bretèche*

L'affaire De la Bretèche est une histoire relativement compliquée, écrite à l'origine pour une petite classe de huit Canadiens anglophones[5] de bon niveau. Je m'en suis par la suite servi, toujours avec succès, pour des groupes (homogènes ou hétérogènes) de six à vingt-cinq personnes.

La solution de cette énigme policière demande en général un peu moins de deux heures et demie, soit quatre séances de trente-cinq minutes, si on a affaire à des élèves de niveau 'moyen'. Le travail peut évidemment prendre davantage de temps (jusqu'à quatre heures), mais je l'ai aussi vu correctement fait plusieurs fois en moins de deux heures.

Les indices

1. *Le millionnaire Claude DE LA BRETÈCHE a été trouvé mort le 11 août, à neuf heures du matin. Son corps flottait dans la piscine de sa résidence principale, Le Clos des Amandiers, située dans la banlieue marseillaise. C'est la bonne qui l'a découvert.*
2. *Monsieur DROUÈRE est en général un homme peu bavard; mais dès qu'il a un peu trop bu, il se met à parler fort et cherche querelle à tout le monde.*
3. *Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE va souvent dîner et danser au club Les Deux*

Pingouins, où se retrouvent surtout des gens de la haute société.

4. *Un voisin qui promenait son chien le soir du 10 août affirme qu'entre onze heures vingt et onze heures vingt-cinq il a vu une voiture rouge démarrer de chez les DE LA BRETÈCHE.*
5. *Un porte-parole de l'agence principale du Crédit Lyonnais à Marseille a dit que Monsieur PETIT est venu avec un attaché-case le matin du 11 et qu'il est reparti au bout de quelques minutes après s'être servi de son coffre personnel.*
6. *D'après le rapport de police, il s'est noyé.*
7. *Le matin du 10 août, Monsieur DE LA BRÊTÈCHE a fait venir le directeur-adjoint des Bilans Faciles, une société d'expertise comptable, et lui a confié un travail urgent.*
8. *Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE était âgé de 62 ans. C'était un homme d'affaires impitoyable et un patron sans coeur.*
9. *D'après la police, cela faisait neuf heures que Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE était mort quand on a découvert son corps.*
10. *Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE est âgée de 35 ans. Elle a déclaré qu'elle est revenue du club à onze heures du soir et qu'elle s'est immédiatement couchée parce qu'elle avait mal à la tête.*
11. *La bonne des DE LA BRETÈCHE a déclaré que, quand elle a prévenu sa patronne que Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE était mort, celle-ci a tout de suite téléphoné à la police, et puis a fait un autre appel téléphonique.*
12. *La police n'est pas parvenue à trouver Monsieur PETIT après le crime.*
13. *Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE a déclaré qu'il lui a semblé entendre Monsieur DROUÈRE se quereller avec son mari. Elle n'est pas complètement sûre qu'ils se soient disputés parce qu'elle était à moitié endormie.*
14. *Monsieur DROUÈRE a souvent été vu en compagnie de Monsieur PETIT au champ de course du Bois Vert.*
15. *Sa tête, qui portait les traces d'un coup violent, a été atteinte par un objet cylindrique. On a trouvé des éclats de verre dans ses cheveux.*
16. *Roger BIANCOURT est un pompiste qui travaille à la station Esso où Monsieur DROUÈRE s'est arrêté à onze heures et demie le soir du crime. Monsieur BIANCOURT a dit que DROUÈRE avait l'air de s'être battu avec quelqu'un quand il l'a vu aller aux toilettes.*
17. *Monsieur PETIT est membre du club Les Deux Pingouins. C'est là qu'il était, de sept heures et demie à minuit et demie, le soir du crime.*
18. *Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE avait une police d'assurance sur la vie. Il était assuré pour une somme très élevée.*
19. *Madame PETIT a dit que, le matin du 11, son mari a reçu un coup de téléphone vers neuf heures et qu'ensuite il est sorti très rapidement.*
20. *Un médecin légiste a conclu que sa blessure à la tête n'a pas été fatale, mais qu'il est probablement resté inconscient jusqu'au moment où il s'est noyé.*
21. *D'après Mademoiselle LOISEAU, la secrétaire de Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE, Monsieur PETIT s'est disputé avec son patron pendant près d'une heure cet après-midi-là. Monsieur PETIT est finalement sorti du bureau en claquant la porte.*
22. *Jean-Luc DROUÈRE est âgé de 53 ans. C'est le comptable de la société De la Bretèche & C^{ie}. Il n'a pas reçu d' augmentation de salaire depuis six ans, et il paraît qu'il est rempli d'amertume à cause de cela.*
23. *Il y a sans doute eu une bagarre à côté de la piscine. Une table de jardin avec un dessus en verre a été renversée. La plaque de verre était cassée en morceaux.*
24. *Monsieur DROUÈRE a été arrêté à Hendaye (près de la frontière espagnole) le 11 août, à huit heures du soir, avec 900.000 francs dans son attaché-case. Il était au volant d'une Citroën Xantia rouge (un modèle de 1994).*
25. *Un inspecteur de police a affirmé qu'étant donné l'état de ses habits on l'a presque certainement traîné sur les dalles de ciment qui entourent la piscine.*
26. *D'après le garçon du Bar du Vieux-Port, Monsieur DROUÈRE n'a pas arrêté de boire, de sept heures et demie à dix heures et demie, le soir du crime. Le garçon affirme aussi qu'il a entendu DROUÈRE parler à DE LA BRETÈCHE au téléphone, aux alentours de vingt-deux heures quinze.*

27. *Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE a déclaré à la police que Monsieur DROUÈRE avait menacé de tuer son mari deux ou trois mois auparavant.*
28. *L'expert comptable des Bilans Faciles à découvert qu'il manque trois millions de francs dans les comptes de la société De la Bretèche & C^{ie}.*
29. *Parmi les morceaux de la table brisée, il y avait aussi ceux d'une bouteille de pastis sur lesquels on a trouvé les empreintes digitales de DROUÈRE.*
30. *François PETIT a quarante-deux ans. C'était l'associé de Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE. On l'a souvent vu parier des sommes importantes au champ de course du Bois Vert.*

La solution proposée[6]

Claude DE LA BRETÈCHE a été assassiné par sa femme.

Le soir du crime, Monsieur DROUÈRE, qui avait beaucoup bu, est allé chez DE LA BRETÈCHE pour entendre les accusations de celui-ci et admettre qu'il avait détourné des fonds; et peut-être aussi pour l'implorer d'avoir un peu d'indulgence. Une querelle et une bagarre s'ensuivirent. DROUÈRE saisit la bouteille de pastis qui se trouvait à côté de lui et la cassa sur la tête de son patron; c'est là qu'il prit peur et s'enfuit.

Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE n'était pas à moitié endormie, comme elle l'a déclaré plus tard à la police. Elle avait tout entendu. Une fois le calme revenu, elle sortit de la maison pour voir ce qui s'était passé et trouva son mari étendu par terre à côté de la piscine: il s'était évanoui. Après un bon moment de réflexion, elle finit par se rendre compte que c'était l'occasion ou jamais de se débarrasser de lui, car on accuserait DROUÈRE au lieu d'elle. Elle entreprit donc de traîner Monsieur DE LA BRETÈCHE jusqu'au bord de la piscine, puis elle le jeta à l'eau. Elle ne pouvait évidemment plus appeler la police: DROUÈRE était parti depuis déjà longtemps, et l'heure du décès l'aurait rendue suspecte.[7] Elle retourna se coucher et attendit jusqu'au lendemain, de façon à ce que ce soit la bonne qui découvre le cadavre.

PETIT et DROUÈRE s'étaient tous les deux appropriés de grosses sommes d'argent appartenant à la société *De la Bretèche & C^{ie}*: DROUÈRE, par cupidité et par rancune; et PETIT, pour payer ses dettes de jeu. DE LA BRETÈCHE commençait à avoir des soupçons; il demanda à un expert comptable de vérifier le bilan de son entreprise. Le motif pour lequel il s'est disputé avec son associé n'est pas clair.[8] Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE entretenait des relations amoureuses avec PETIT: son mari aurait pu s'en douter et en demander compte à celui-ci. DE LA BRETÈCHE aurait également pu accuser son associé d'avoir commis un détournement de fonds et, bien sûr, PETIT aurait protesté avec véhémence.

Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE a téléphoné à PETIT pour l'informer que son mari venait d'être assassiné et, si elle était au fait des activités illicites de son amant, pour l'avertir du danger qu'il courait. On est en droit de supposer qu'elle espérait pouvoir rejoindre PETIT après avoir touché l'argent de la police d'assurance dont elle était la bénéficiaire. Mais celui-ci savait que, pour lui, le seul moyen d'échapper à des poursuites judiciaires était de déguerpir sans laisser de traces. Il prit ce qui restait de sa part des trois millions détournés et disparut.

DROUÈRE, qui n'était pas complètement soûl le soir du crime, s'était rendu compte qu'il n'avait pas tué DE LA BRETÈCHE, mais qu'il serait néanmoins considéré comme coupable à la fois de vol et de meurtre. Il tenta de filer sur l'Espagne au lieu de l'Italie (pour donner le change à ses poursuivants éventuels) avec sa part du butin.

Remarques

La manière dont les apprenants s'organisent pour résoudre une énigme policière et, dans une certaine mesure, l'efficacité de leur travail paraissent dépendre de la culture prédominante du groupe auquel on a affaire. J'ai constaté, par exemple, que si les élèves sont en majorité japonais, ils ont toujours l'air désorientés au début de l'exercice. Cela tient en partie à ce que, malgré mes avertissements, ils espèrent encore se faire aider. Il leur faut jusqu'à vingt ou vingt-cinq minutes pour comprendre que je ne viendrai pas à leur secours. De surcroît, le(la) président(e) répugne souvent à imposer son autorité. Les fiches sont lues un peu au hasard, et la première séance est parfois chaotique.

Les apprenants commencent d'habitude à mieux s'organiser pendant leur deuxième 'réunion'. C'est au cours de cette étape qu'ils essayent de faire une liste de tous les personnages, ou un tableau montrant la succession chronologique des évènements.

La troisième réunion se déroule encore mieux. Quand ils sont arrivés à ce stade, les élèves ne s'occupent en général que d'un seul personnage ou d'un seul espace temporel à la fois. Mais, dans certains cas, il faudra attendre la quatrième séance pour qu'ils découvrent enfin les criminels et leurs mobiles.

Dans *L'affaire de la Bretèche*, il y a un assez grand nombre de facteurs à considérer. Si les apprenants veulent arriver à tout expliquer, il est possible qu'ils aient besoin d'une ou deux séances supplémentaires.[9]

Conclusion: énigmes policières et maîtrise de la langue parlée

Quand on s'en sert comme je viens de le recommander, une énigme policière est, à mon avis, un outil presque idéal pour augmenter les capacités orales de nos élèves.

Les avantages de cette méthode sont évidents en ce qui concerne la pratique de la langue: au-delà des lectures à haute voix, des répétitions et des paraphrases, il faut que les apprenants fassent des déductions logiques, organisent leurs idées, expriment des opinions et émettent des hypothèses; on en arrive vite à une *véritable discussion*, souvent très animée, dont le but est de résoudre un problème concret – et à laquelle tout le monde, sans exception, doit participer.

Les énigmes policières possèdent également des avantages au niveau des fonctions linguistiques et de la grammaire, car l'enseignant peut suggérer (voire imposer) le recours à certaines fonctions et l'emploi de certaines structures grammaticales par la manière dont il présente l'information (les 'indices'). Toutes les histoires de meurtre, de vol ou d'escroquerie, même les plus simples, forceront d'ailleurs les élèves à poser beaucoup de questions en utilisant un temps du passé. Elles les obligeront aussi à exprimer leur accord ou leur désaccord, à interrompre des camarades, et à faire des suggestions.

Quand j'ai élaboré *L'affaire de la Bretèche*, je tenais à ce que mes étudiants canadiens apprennent à manier le passif, ainsi que le présent et l'imparfait du conditionnel dans des phrases commençant par 'si'. J'espérais également les inciter à rapporter les paroles d'autres personnes ('Selon/d'après le pompiste . . .', 'Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE a dit que . . . mais un inspecteur de police a dit que . . .'); à faire des descriptions et des résumés oraux; et à exprimer des relations de cause à effet ou des relations temporelles.[10] Les résultats escomptés ont été en grande partie obtenus. Par conséquent, je crois pouvoir me permettre d'encourager mes collègues à s'inspirer de Georges Simenon, un des maîtres reconnus de la langue française écrite,[11] pour aider leurs élèves à mieux s'exprimer oralement.

Notes

1. Si on ne se sert d'une énigme qu'avec un seul groupe pendant toute la durée de 'l'enquête', on peut très bien demander aux apprenants d'inscrire leur nom au crayon au dos de chaque fiche. Les noms seront effacés lorsqu'une solution aura été trouvée.
2. Le(la) vice-président(e) et le(la) secrétaire pourront également être désignés d'office.
3. Quand certains élèves sont vraiment faibles par rapport aux autres, il est recommandé de leur distribuer soit moins de fiches, soit des fiches dont le texte est un peu plus simple ou peu plus court.
4. Il m'arrive quelquefois d'enregistrer une séance. Les apprenants peuvent ainsi s'écouter parler, puis tenter de se corriger eux-mêmes. Cela me permet, à moi aussi, de revenir sur certaines parties de la discussion et de faire un travail de correction approfondi à une date ultérieure.
5. Des jeunes licenciés admis à suivre un stage de formation professionnelle de longue durée à l'université de Victoria, dans l'île de Vancouver; le stage devait leur permettre

d'enseigner dans les écoles bilingues de la Colombie Britannique

6. Demander aux élèves de présenter, oralement ou par écrit, la solution à laquelle ils sont arrivés, puis de la comparer à celle-ci.
7. Madame DE LA BRETÈCHE aurait eu quelques chances de réussir dans sa sinistre entreprise si elle n'avait pas attendu plus d'une demi-heure avant de jeter son mari à l'eau. Quand l'activité se déroule bien, les apprenants n'ont guère de mal à s'apercevoir que cette lenteur d'esprit a été fatale à la meurtrière.
8. L'avantage d'une telle équivoque est évidemment de prolonger et d'animer la discussion – et de favoriser l'usage du conditionnel. Il est d'ailleurs possible d'aller plus loin dans ce sens, avec des énigmes pouvant être résolues de plusieurs façons. *L'affaire de la Bretèche* ne serait-elle pas, par hasard, une énigme de cette sorte? . . . Je laisse à mes collègues (et à leurs élèves) le soin d'en décider.
9. Il n'est pas rare que les apprenants continuent à discuter en dehors de la classe. Je les ai souvent vus échanger des opinions sur les mobiles possibles de personnages soupçonnés, mettre en parallèle les emplois du temps des suspects, et même dessiner des cartes après les séances.

   L'activité que je viens de décrire engendre souvent un bon esprit de corps dans une classe, parce que chacun a besoin de l'avis des autres et se montre prêt à les écouter. Mais le plus important, je crois, c'est que presque tout le monde éprouve du plaisir à participer,
10. Quand je veux insister sur le bon emploi de certaines structures ou fonctions, je commence en général par les 'afficher': je choisis, pour chacune d'elles, des mots ou expressions clefs que j'écris en très grosses lettres au tableau et/ou sur de grandes feuilles de papier blanc collées aux murs de la salle de classe. Par exemple, pour 'comment interrompre poliment': 'Permettez-moi de vous interrompre . . .' et 'Je m'excuse de t'interrompre, mais . . .' Si un(e) élève hésite ou commet une erreur et qu'une de ces structures ou fonctions est en cause, je me contente de lui montrer du doigt le tableau (ou une des grandes feuilles de papier); dans la majorité des cas, il(elle) se reprend sans que j'aie à dire quoi que ce soit.
11. Simenon était *aussi* un virtuose de la langue parlée, puisque les textes de la majorité des livres qu'il a fait publier après 1974 avaient d'abord été dictés au magnétophone (parmi ces ouvrages: *Un homme comme les autres*, *Un banc au soleil*, *Tant que je suis vivant*, *Destinées*). Il reste que, à ma connaissance, ses romans policiers ont tous été 'ecrits' – seulement.

University of Brighton

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The Right Tool for the Job

Ian S. Taylor

Having read with interest David Nott's analysis of student errors in the pronunciation of French in the June 1994 issue of 'Francophonie', I would like to offer some practical suggestions which, in my experience, can be used profitably at any learning level from primary to degree and beyond. Clearly the earlier in the learning process the fewer will be the opportunities for entrenching the unhelpful habits which were the subject of David Nott's article, but one should never underestimate the ability of old dogs to learn new tricks.

Anglophone pronunciation difficulties in French stem largely from the fundamental differences in the mouth shape the speaker adopts which make the production of particular sounds in the francophone phonetic 'set' difficult or impossible. In sequence this is cumulative, as the finishing shape for each successive sound will be the starting shape of the next one. Attempting to speak French with an English mouth shape may be likened to trying to undo metric-sized nuts with Imperial-sized spanners – only some fit and even then imperfectly. The right tool for the job is the only satisfactory solution. Fortunately most of us are capable of doing a very adequate job with our adjustable spanner if we learn to set it accurately.

Where to start

The most telling point at which to start, at any learning level, is with tongue position. The teacher should invite the learner to try to make utterances in English with the tongue lying low in the mouth, its tip touching the back of the bottom teeth throughout. Phrases with plenty of 't', 'd', 'l' and 'n' sounds will usually elicit the observation that 'it sounds like French'. Try saying 'It's tea-time'. Even the most case-hardened ½" Whit should be able to conclude that this mouth shape might result in French also sounding like French. Conversely, attempting utterances with 'th' sounds using the same basic tongue position will illustrate the difficulty many francophones have in pronouncing certain English words.

An alternative approach is to give examples of the two contrasting mouth positions using the same utterances, and invite the learners to say where the differences lie before themselves attempting to reproduce them.

Further exercises can show that sound sequences in French which present difficulty for the anglophone become easily manageable if the French tongue position is adopted. A uvular 'r', for instance, becomes pronounceable after a dental 't' (e.g. train, traiter, trop) whereas it is impossible after the normal English alveolar 't' produced with the tip of the tongue against the gum ridge. Keeping the tongue low so that the throat is open should help. Success with this sound can be particularly encouraging.

In subsequent teaching, the reminder 'tongue' can be sufficient to help in achieving fluent utterance.

Practice especially of dental consonants in sentences such as 'Ton thé, t' 'a-t-il ôté ta toux?' and 'Dido dîna, dit-on, du dos d'un dôdu dindon' can help consolidate, and establish the tongue position as an automatic part of the language.

And how to go further

It is worth pointing out that using a French tongue position makes it more difficult to produce those English vowels which so often betray the anglophone, the whole internal shape of the mouth having been modified. Nasalisations also come more naturally, and there will be some added lip tension, again a feature worth emphasising and practising. The ready availability nowadays of T.V. and video material showing French speakers' faces in close-up facilitates observation of French and English mouths in action and at rest, and the learner can be invited, with the sound turned down, to decide whether they are looking at a francophone or anglophone mouth. This is frequently possible when watching an American film dubbed into French.

One further distinguishing feature worthy of attention as occasion presents itself is the even rhythm of French as compared with the stressing of syllables in English. Tapping the contrasting rhythms of cognates can promote awareness of the difference: *possibility* ..-.. as against *possibilité* ..... , *francophone* -.. as against *francophone* ... , *inevitably* .-... as against *inévitablement* .... Those language teachers fortunate enough to have taken a course in phonetics (and they should surely be increasing in number not decreasing, with today's need for oral competence) might feel it appropriate at some stage to point out the effects of maintaining English stress-timing when speaking French.

Conclusion

There are of course wide differences in basic mouth shape regionally and individually amongst French and English speakers alike. The Glaswegian will not have the same problem with tongue position as the Londoner, nor does the Marseillais adopt the same mouth shape as the Parisian. The above exercises are valid however in helping most anglophones produce a reasonably comprehensible and standard French. For many they could markedly increase the enjoyment and, more important, decrease the frustration of learning a language which already poses a wider range of difficulties for the English speaker than most other European languages.

Footnote for the non-technical: ½" Whit = Spanner for a ½ inch nut (Whitworth sizing system)

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Promoting educational opportunity and the application of knowledge

L'Opposition /ɛ̃/ ~ /œ̃/ en français parisien

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The four nasal vowels

The nasal vowels of French and their phonemic status set the French language apart from many others. It has, for some time, been known that the four-nasal-vowel system was undergoing change. /ɑ̃/is becoming rounded and raised and the distinction between /œ̃/ and /ɛ̃/ is said to be disappearing, with [ɛ̃] being more frequent and /œ̃/ disappearing altogether, according to current linguistic thought as expressed by French linguists.[1]

The evolution of the /ɛ̃/ ~ /œ̃/ opposition

The tendency for /œ̃/ to be pronounced [ɛ̃] in Parisian French is not new. In fact, Desgranges[2] already indicated this in his dictionary in 1821 in which he noted a pronunciation which was in his view *trop relâchée: KEKZAIN* for *quelques uns*. Bauche 100 years later claimed that all /œ̃/s were pronounced [ɛ̃] in *français populaire*.[3]

The general view today is reflected in Henriette Walter's opinion as expressed in the *Dynamique*:[4]

> *En résumé, la tendance à l'élimination de /œ̃/ semble être partie du peuple parisien au début du XIXe siècle, pour commencer à contaminer le reste de la communauté parisienne, y compris la société cultivée au début du XXe siècle, mais plusieurs ouvrages spécialisés ont choisi de ne pas en tenir compte.*

Walter's conclusion is that there is an *évolution vers l'élimination du phonème /œ̃/.*

Survey results

Martinet's Weinsberg survey in 1941

Martinet's Weinsberg prisoner-of-war-camp survey among officers in 1941 revealed an average of 42% of Parisian informants who did not make a distinction between *brin* and *brun*.

The percentages by generation were as follows:

Seniores	47%
Moyens	47%
Juniores	36%

He concluded:

> *On aurait pu s'attendre à voir les jeunes manifester plus nettement que leurs aînés la tendance à la confusion. C'est plutôt le contraire qui a l'air de se produire.*[5]

Deyhime, Reichstein and Martinet compared[6]

Below, the figures for Martinet's survey are compared with those of Reichstein and Deyhime. The surveys took place in 1941, 1956/7 and 1962/3 respectively. The age groups were as follows:

Martinet:	*Seniores*	47 years,
	Moyens	35 years,
	Juniores	25 years,
Reichstein:		13-14 years,
Deyhime:		23 years.

*Distinguent **brin** et **brun** (souvent avec quelques difficultés)*

Paris...	M (Martinet)	57%
	Ms	52%
	Mm	52%
	Mj	63%.[7]
	D (Deyhime)	28%
	R (Reichstein)	17%

Walter

Henriette Walter's figures are not quite as threatening for the future of the [ɛ̃] ~ [œ̃] opposition, since 53% of her informants still made this opposition. She notes, however, that the average age of that particular group is 51 years, while the average age of those who do not make the distinction is 12.5 years younger.[8]

Social factors in a more recent survey[9]

A survey on the mid-vowels, carried out in 1988, contained useful data with regard to nasal vowels. A preliminary analysis of a restricted number of utterances has revealed interesting figures.

The table below indicates the percentage of /ɛ̃/ ~ /œ̃/ confusions:

	ENS	RATP	ENS & RATP combined
Average	47%	80%	63.5%
Seniors	50%	80%	65%
Majors	40%	90%	65%
Juniors	50%	70%	60%

What emerges clearly from the figures is that the RATP group is far less likely to distinguish /œ̃/ and /ɛ̃/ (the overall non-distinction figure for the ENS groups being 47%, with the overall RATP figure being 80%). It might be argued that the ENS groups are more geographically mobile and so are less likely to reflect a Parisian pronunciation. More interesting is the nature of the confusion. This is where the preliminary studies have revealed surprising results.

Is œ̃ a phone or a phoneme and are its days numbered?

Linguists normally argue that the confusion between /ɛ̃/ and /œ̃/ will lead to the disappearance of the less frequent /œ̃/ phoneme or even the [œ̃] sound. The ENS and RATP survey was particularly revealing in this respect. The disappearance of the opposition in question was expected to be to the detriment of [œ̃]. However, this was not always found to be the case.

18 out of the expected 60 [ɛ̃]s were pronounced [œ̃] rather than [ɛ̃] by the ENS and RATP informants (in *hein, éreinté* or *teinté*). The numbers were the same in both social groups.

Though the figures for the ENS informants seem somewhat inconsistent, on the RATP side they seem to indicate a clear increase. The table below indicates the percentage of [œ̃]s pronounced where [ɛ̃] would be expected in *hein, éreinté* and *teinté.*

ENS	[œ̃]%	RATP	[œ̃]%
Average	30	Average	30
Seniors	40	Seniors	10
Majors	10	Majors	30
Juniors	40	Juniors	50

Conclusions

1. /ɛ̃/ ~ /œ̃/ is clearly an unreliable opposition in Parisian French. (This fact has been acknowledged for many years.)
2. Segments traditionally containing [œ̃] are pronounced [ɛ̃] by the majority of Parisian speakers.
3. The tendency outlined in 2 above is related to social class, possibly only in so far as the bourgeoisie is more socially mobile and often has its roots in the provinces where the opposition is more likely to occur. So the RATP group is less likely to oppose /ɛ̃/ ~ /œ̃/.
4. Surveys of the last 50 years have tested the established view that the phoneme /œ̃/ and indeed the phone [œ̃] are disappearing and failed to focus on the allophones of /ɛ̃/. The recordings used for the current analysis have revealed the unexpected occurrence of [œ̃] as an allophone of /ɛ̃/. The proportion is too high to be insignificant.
5. The occurrence of [œ̃] may be due to hypercorrection and while it will not lead to a recovery of this nasal-vowel opposition, it may ensure that the sound [œ̃] will remain even if it will not have phonemic status.

Notes

1. See, for example, Walter, H, *La dynamique des phonèmes dans le lexique français contemporain*, Paris, France-Expansion, 1976, pp. 319–338 or Martinet, A, *Le français sans fard*, Paris, PUF, 1973, pp. 186–188. (Their

views are not normally regarded as debatable and have gone uncontested: Walter on the decline of œ̃, Martinet on the decline of the /ɛ̃/ ~ /œ̃/ opposition.) According to Gadet, F in *Le français ordinaire*, Paris, Colin, 1989, *[ɛ̃] et [œ̃] ne distinguent que de rares couples (brin/brun, empreint/emprunt), de toute façon distingués par la morphosyntaxe. Une simplification se produit, au profit du plus fréquent, [ɛ̃].*

2. Desgranges, J, *Petit dictionnaire du peuple à l'usage des quatre cinquièmes de la France*, Paris, 1821. (Quoted in Walter (1976), pp. 319–320).
3. Bauche, H, *Le langage populaire*, Paris, Payot, 1928, pp. 42–43.
4. Walter, H, *La dynamique des phonèmes dans le lexique français contemporain*, Paris, France-Expansion, 1976, p. 321.
5. Martinet, A, *La prononciation du français contemporain*, Paris, Droz, 1971 (lst ed. 1945), p. 150.
6. *Le français sans fard*, Paris, PUF, 1973, p. 187. (Here Martinet contrasts results given in Deyhime, G, 'Enquête phonologique du français contemporain' in *La Linguistique*, vols. 1 & 2, pp. 97–108 & 57–63 and Reichstein, R, 'Etudes des variations sociales et géographiques des faits linguistiques' in *Word* 16 (1960) Paris, PUF, pp. 55–85).
7. Ms (Martinet seniores), Mm (Martinet moyens), Mj (Martinet juniores).
8. Walter, H, *La dynamique des phonèmes dans le lexique français contemporain*, Paris, France-Expansion, 1976, pp. 338.
9. For brief survey details, see Landick, M, 'The mid-vowels in figures: hard facts' in French Review, vol. 69, no. 1, 1995, pp. 88–102.

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Contemporary French songs and the representation of death

Ian Pickup University of Birmingham

La chanson française is alive and well. Despite claims to the contrary; despite the invasion of *la musique anglo-saxonne* which captures most of the attention of the younger generations in France;[1] despite the *Coca-Colanisation* of French culture (*Macdo, disco, dodo?*). Despite all of these factors, the contemporary music critic Lucien Rioux feels able to make statements such as the following:

> Exit la chanson française? N'est-elle plus l'apanage que de «papys» nostalgiques du beau langage de Georges Brassens, de la jeunesse folle (mais lointaine) de Charles Trenet, des coups de coeur de Jacques Brel et des coups de gueule de Léo Ferré? En enterrant naguère Brel et Brassens, et récemment Gainsbourg et Montand,[2] n'était-ce pas à la chanson française tout entière moribonde qu'on rendait hommage?
>
> Pas si vite! A peine a-t-on sorti son mouchoir pour la pleurer qu'on s'aperçoit que les choses sont loin d'être aussi simples. Les meilleures places au Top 50, Top Albums et autres hit-parades sont 'trustées' le plus souvent par les Anglo-Saxons, mais, en fin de compte, c'est un Français, Patrick Bruel, qui arrive en tête des ventes de disques en 1991. Avant lui, Francis Cabrel et Jean-Jacques Goldman occupèrent cette place enviée.[3]

Intriguingly, when one recalls the popularity of the *chanson rive gauche*[4] in the late 1960s and the 1970s, Rioux goes on to assert that

> La domination des autochtones sur les étrangers peut même être le fait d'artistes réputés «difficiles», voire «intellectuels».[5]

La chanson française is dead? Certainly not. But amongst the many lyrical, poetic, political, ecological, intellectual and love themes which it currently explores, we do find a recurring fascination with the representation of death, a theme which may often be handled with caution or even reticence by many Anglo-Saxon singers,[6] but which has, historically, been treated far more extensively and dramatically by any number of *auteurs/compositeurs/interprètes* on the other side of the Channel. It is the purpose of this article to analyse and evaluate representations of death in six more-or-less contemporary songs (released between the late seventies and the early nineties) by Frederik Mey, Francis Cabrel, Guy Béart Yves Duteil, Renaud and Jean Ferrat.[7] The songs have been selected not primarily because they are necessarily 'typical' (whatever that means) but because of their apparent variety and – intriguingly – certain underlying similarities. Two of them deal with suicide (Mey, Cabrel), one with an execution (Béart) and three with the death of a friend or mentor (Duteil, Renaud, Ferrat), one of the latter occurring as a result of a road accident (Renaud). It goes without saying that many other songs could have been selected instead of, or in addition to, those analysed below. Had we adopted even a slightly more historical approach and looked at earlier songs, it would have been apparent that Brel, Brassens and Ferré, for example, make death a recurring theme in their work, whilst more recently Souchon, Jonasz and others have paid more than passing attention to the theme.

Frederik Mey, a bilingual Berliner who enjoyed much success in France in the late 1970s (including a successful season at Bobino and an appearance at the Olympia), records the death of an acquaintance in *Dédé Slovinski*.[8] The narrative discourse is familiar in tone and is directed at an unnamed, unidentified person (presumably the singer's wife, as we shall see in the first verse). It takes the form, initially, of an account of a relaxed telephone conversation with a friend named François about professional and domestic matters. The suicide of a musician who was not amongst the narrator's close friends but whom he knew quite well – intrudes suddenly on the conversation with no prior warning whatsoever:

> Tiens, je viens d'avoir un coup de fil de François, il s'agit de cette émission/
> Qu'on doit enregistrer jeudi, et lundi commenceront les répétitions/
> Et il a même pu m'avoir les musiciens que je lui avais demandés/
> D'ailleurs, il paraît que c'est la même équipe qui était là l'année passée/
> Puis il m'a demandé de tes nouvelles et il m'a dit que sa femme allait mieux/
> Qu'un de ces soirs il faudrait qu'on s'organise un gentil petit dîner chez eux/
> Et juste quand j'ai voulu raccrocher, il me dit comme ça, comme en passant,/
> Que Dédé Slovinski s'est flingué hier matin dans son appartement.

The unexpected shock provoked by the revelation is intensified by the use of the familiar expression *se flinguer*, the brutal nature of which is immediately brought home to the listener by the narrator's reaction:

> Ce n'est pas vrai! mais nom de Dieu, c'est une blague! ça ne peut pas être vrai./
> C'est impossible comme histoire! c'est trop bête, mais pourquoi l'aurait-il fait?/
> Ça, c'est le genre d'incident qui se trouve en dernière page du journal/
> Entre la météo et le tiercé, parmi les faits divers les plus banals.

The short, exclamatory phrases denote disbelief, an emotion soon followed by the platitudinous assertion that it is the kind of minor news item we read about, but which never concerns us directly. When the singer goes on spontaneously to evoke the victim's physical appearance (for example, 'il ressemblait à un croisement entre Obélix et un commandant d'Air France'), what is generated is a feeling of incomprehension ('il ne m'a vraiment pas laissé l'impression d'un tourmenté, d'un angoissé'). The recollection of meetings between the narrator and the dead man does nothing to lessen the feeling of shock; indeed, bemusement, tinged with an undercurrent of anger, is the final sentiment expressed:

> «Mais Bon Dieu qu'est-ce qui s'est passé dans la tête de ce Sacré (*sic*) vieux farceur?»/
> Plus je me pose de questions et plus j'essaye de comprendre moins je comprends./
> Dédé Slovinsky s'est flingué hier matin dans son appartement.

Death, then, intrudes unexpectedly and the spontaneous reaction of the singer is reinforced by his speed of delivery and is thrown further into relief by the unobtrusive accompaniment of an accoustic guitar. The cold, staring fact of suicide is reiterated at the end of every verse in the phrase «Et Dédé Slovinski s'est flingué hier matin dans son appartement».

Our second song about suicide, Francis Cabrel's *C'était l'hiver*, is entirely different in tone and adopts imagistic patterns which are far removed from Mey's conversational, 'spontaneous' discourse. The orchestration (guitar, accordeon reinforced by flute and strings) immediately sets a tone of lamentation and prepares for the retrospective, euphemistically presented account of the suicide of a twenty-year-old girl. It is the victim herself who is quoted at the beginning of the song:

> Elle disait «j'ai déjà trop marché
> Mon coeur est déjà trop lourd de secrets,
> Trop lourd de peines»
>
> Elle disait «je ne continue plus
> Ce qui m'attend, je l'ai déjà vécu
> C'est plus la peine»

By immediately quoting the suicide victim – the actual act of suicide will not be alluded to until the fourth verse – Cabrel is able to evoke world-weariness with an undercurrent of depression in strikingly simple phrases, the key to which is the repetition of trop, *déjà* and the negative *ne . . . plus*. In the third verse, the unnamed *elle* is placed in a religious and elemental setting and her inability to cope with life is evoked in reported speech:

> Elle disait que vivre était cruel
> Elle ne croyait plus au soleil
> Ni au silence des églises
> Même mes sourires lui faisaient peur
> C'était l'hiver dans le fond de son coeur

Variations on the final line of this verse have become something of a musical commonplace since Verlaine[9] but the correlation between the external state of nature and internal emotion (*hiver/coeur*) creates a striking contrast with the earlier reference to *soleil*. This inability to find warmth in the source of life is reinforced in religious terms through the articulation of an inability to find peace and tranquillity in the haven of a church.[10] It is however elemental rather than religious imagery which is used – somewhat euphemistically – to evoke the suicide itself:

> Le vent n'a jamais été plus froid
> La pluie plus violente que ce soir-là
> Le soir de ces vingt ans
> Le soir où elle a éteint le feu
> Derrière la façade de ses yeux
> Dans un éclair blanc

The imagery has now become multi-layered: the extinguishing of the fire (*feu* ↔ *flamme* ↔ *ardeur* ↔ *chaleur* ↔ *amour* ↔ *passion*) is located behind the eyes (*le feu du regard*), but the act itself takes away life *dans un éclair blanc* (*éclair* ↔ *lumière* ↔ *rapidité*). Life ends, then, in a blinding flash (but also *blanc* ↔ *blafard* ↔ *vide, le blanc des yeux*) and as a result the eyes are no longer able to *lancer des éclairs*. What remains to be articulated is an elegiac conclusion in which elemental and religious images combine to reverse the qualities attributed to *elle* and the previously smiling singer:

> Elle a sûrement rejoint le ciel
> Elle brûle à côté du soleil
> Comme les nouvelles églises
> Mais si depuis ce soir-là je pleure
> C'est qu'il fait froid dans le fond de mon coeur

For *elle* the inability to believe in the tranquillity of a church has been replaced – in the singer's mind – by the wishful presumption that she has found her place in the sky/heaven; the coldness of winter in her heart has been replaced by the burning fire of the sun; she now radiates heat *comme les nouvelles églises* and it is the singer himself whose eyes are filled with tears and whose heart is plunged into the coldness of winter.

Anonymity is preserved throughout Cabrel's song and it is the anonymity of a nobody which is the focal point of a song by Guy Béart – *Le Quidam* – which ends with the execution of the protagonist. Delivered at great speed with a pronounced, rhythmic instrumental backing (reinforced by vocal backing in the chorus), the song opens with an exhortation which is typical of the 'folksong' genre to which so many of Béart's numbers belong:

> Ecoutez l'histoire à coup sûr obscure
> D'un pauvre quidam et de ses tourments
> Tout ce qu'il subit comme mésaventures
> Pour connaître enfin la gloire du moment

The impersonal, distant nature of what is being recounted is reinforced by the repetitive chorus which places the unnamed, unknown protagonist in a whole family of nonentities:

> Il était simple quidam
> Son père était quidam
> Son frère était quidam
> Et lui était quidam
> Aussi

The pause before the final 'aussi' accentuates the notion of uniformity and the theme of anonymity is maintained in a whole series of *mésaventures* through which our hero tries to make a name for himself. An attempt to generate publicity (and attract the backing of a *mécène*) by throwing himself into the river fails miserably when he is fished out by an equally anonymous *quidam* who leaves without even giving his name. There follows the burning of the offices of an evening newspaper, an equally unsuccessful act because it is followed by our hero's protestations of guilt which fall on deaf ears and by the arrest of innocent wretches who confess their guilt *comme il est normal*. The song ends with a double twist: firstly our anonymous chap is arrested for a crime which he did not commit and secondly he has another stroke of luck when he is promptly condemned to death. Subsequently, his new-found fame leads to the publication of his photograph in the press but as he at last gains renown as an executed criminal,

Malheureusement une coquille infâme
Se glissa dans l'orthographe de son nom
De sorte qu'helas toujours anonyme
Il mourut quidam et sans rémission

The irony of the false arrest, soon overtaken by the irony of the misspelling of the name, brings to an end a mildly amusing song[11] in which death – or, initially, near death – has been perceived as a means to an end: the simplest way of achieving fame on the part of an essentially unknown attention-seeker.

Our fourth song recounts the death, presumably through natural causes, of the unnamed mentor of the songwriter. Yves Duteil's *Petit Patron* takes us back to the more poetic, retrospective approach already associated with Francis Cabrel. This time, however, the dead man is older than the singer and is clearly someone held in high regard, though his precise station in life is not revealed. The song opens with an apostrophe as the singer establishes the importance in his life of his departed guide:

Tu m'as laissé sur le chemin
Pour me guider de loin en loin
La moitié de ton âme
Une petite flamme
Qui vacille de temps en temps
Petit Docteur qui dors
Quand elle revoit le joli temps
Où tu vivais encore

The familiar *tu* form immediately establishes a bond of friendship which is reinforced by the assertion that the Petit Docteur still exercises a beneficial influence from beyond the grave. The image of the flame (with its connotations of church candles and 'the eternal flame') parallels the elemental and religious imagery of Cabrel and prepares the way for the image of the graveyard which is presented in the second verse:

Repose au coeur des orchidées
Petit Patron des naufragés
Ton petit cimetière
Est grand comme la terre
Et dans le coeur des gens heureux
Petit Docteur tu dors
Pleure le coeur des amoureux
Petit Patron est mort

For the first time in the songs examined, we have here an explicit reference to the earthly resting place of the deceased (Cabrel alluded to the celestial resting place of his young suicide victim). What Duteil also does in this second verse is to give further oblique clues as to the identity of his late friend and mentor, but without naming him: the Petit Docteur of the first verse (a general practitioner, a professional analyst/psychiatrist or counsellor?) is now also referred to as the Petit Patron of the title (an employer, a senior consultant, a research supervisor or, more probably [following the metaphor], the person perceived as the patron saint of life's castaways?). The flower reference (connoting spirituality in addition to being a tribute to the departed in verse two?) is strangely modified in the third verse in the line *Petit patron des nénuphars* – a somewhat surprising choice, given the fact that the plants grow in ponds and pools. One can only deduce, therefore, that these plants are in some way associated with the dead man. Be that as it may, the natural imagery is then taken up again with a mild reproach which is expressed in the form of a modified version of an aphorism:

Ton travail n'est pas terminé
Tu dors sur tes lauriers

The second phrase here is a variant of *tu te reposes/tu t'endors/ sur tes lauriers* and therefore suggests admirable but unfinished achievements at the moment of death. The final verse is a variation on the second, repeating the reference to orchids and reinforcing the admirable qualities of the dead man (now referred to as *Petit Patron des Mille Idées*). Natural imagery and a euphemistic reference to sleep complete the picture:

Que les hivers te soient cléments
Petit Docteur qui dors
J'aurais le coeur bien plus content
Si tu vivais encore
Petit Docteur de mon printemps
Parfois quand on s'endort
Elle pleure encore de temps en temps
Petit patron est mort

Further similarities to Cabrel's *C'était l'hiver* are immediately apparent here: the juxtaposition of winter and spring in Duteil is somewhat reminiscent of the *hiver/froid* ↔ *soleil* antithesis in Cabrel, whilst the concluding tears shed by a partner of Duteil (*elle pleure*) recall the concluding tears shed by Cabrel's narrative persona (*je pleure*).

So far, we have examined songs in which the deceased person has been given a name only once (Mey's Dédé Slovinski) and any further particulars relative to the deceased have had to be deduced through close analysis of the text. Renaud's accident victim, on the contrary, although not named, is immediately recognizable by the majority of listeners, thanks to the 'public' nature of the tragedy being described. *Putain de camion* is a song which records the death of Renaud's friend Coluche (Michel Colucchi [1944–1986]), the actor/comedian/singer who was responsible for the creation in 1985 of the *Restaurants du Coeur* – which in 1991 served 27.5 million free meals to 365,000 needy people in 1,359 centres.[12] Coluche met his death on June 19 1986, whilst riding a red Honda 1100; he went into an uncontrollable skid just outside the village of Opio (between Valbonne and Châteauneuf) and hit one of the wheels of an articulated lorry which was turning off the road; Coluche was not wearing a crash helmet at the time of the accident.

The tone of the song is very different from anything hitherto examined and is as much a reflection of the temperament and personality of the singer as it is a lamentation on the death of a public celebrity. Renaud 'aura été successivement anarchiste, anarcho-communiste, anarcho-mitterrandiste, anarcho-écologiste, pour finir anarcho-n'importequoitiste-de-gauche' asserts Thierry Séchan,[13] and the opening of the song immediately gives a series of insights into the singer's feeling of rebellion, exasperation and loss:

Putain c'est trop con
Ce putain d'camion
Mais qu'est-ce qu'y faisait là
Putain de vie d'merde
T'as roulé dans l'herbe
Et nous, tu nous plantes là

The popular language employed is overwhelmingly vulgar in tone and the information conveyed is absolutely minimal. However, the fact that Renaud is cursing a lorry is in itself sufficient to evoke the road accident in which Coluche – a fanatical cyclist and, in this case, motorcyclist – met his death. The initial invective is, then, directed at the lorry and even at life itself but there follows a hope of better things in the afterlife:

J'espère au moins qu'là-haut
Il y a moins de salauds

Whilst reinforcing the sordid nature of life on earth, Renaud then evokes the grief of those whom Coluche has left behind:

Tu nous laisses avec les chiens
Avec les méchants les crétins
Sous un soleil qui brille moins fort et moins loin
J'voudrais m'blottir dans un coin
Avec Marius avec Romain
Pleurer avec eux jusqu'à la saint-glinglin

Friends of the singer and, presumably, of the dead man are named but Coluche himself is not. The first significant image in the song – the now less intense sunshine which makes the world a darker place – is reminiscent both of Cabrel's and Duteil's evocation of the elements (leading to images of heat and cold, where death is equated with winter, the extinguishing of a flame). References to the actual scene of the accident simply reinforce this imagery:

Putain j'ai la rage
Contre ce virage
Et contre ce jour-là
Où tu t'es vautré
Dire que c'était l'été
Dans ma tête y fait froid

The prostrate accident victim has died in the heat of early summer but his disappearance simply leaves a cold, numbing sensation in the head of the singer who ends his song with a final contrast:

J'espère au moins qu'là-haut
T'as acheté un vélo
Lolita a plus d'parrain
Nous on a plus notre meilleur copain
T'étais un clown mais t'étais pas un pantin
Enfoiré on t'aimait bien
Maintenant on est tous orphelins
Putain d'camion, putain d'destin, tiens ça craint

After the repetition of an earlier line, there here follows a reference to the deceased hopefully enjoying his bike whilst those who have been 'orphaned' are left with only memories of happier days. Through metonymic association (the ubiquitous bicycle, the qualities of the *clown* who is not to be perceived as a mere *pantin* and who is *enfoiré* – covered, metaphorically, in excrement or projecting the persona of a half-wit), Renaud is able to evoke Coluche in far more detail than he had done previously. The final curse betrays the seething anger which remains because fate has dealt such a bitter blow.

The somewhat tuneless, rhythmic uniformity of Renaud's song expresses an unrelenting mood of outrage whereas Jean Ferrat's *Tu aurais pu vivre* is sung in a gentle, mildly reproachful but essentially nostalgic tone, underscored by the accompaniment of a string quartet and the slight quivering of the rich, baritone voice. The death of a close friend – again unnamed – is introduced through an apostrophe which is quickly followed by a thumbnail sketch:

Tu aurais pu vivre encore un peu
Pour notre bonheur pour notre lumière
Avec ton sourire avec tes yeux clairs
Ton esprit ouvert ton air généreux

Yet again, life is associated with light, a quality reinforced by the mention of the *yeux clairs* of the deceased who is now referred to as

Mon fidèle ami mon copain mon frère

Death itself is subsequently expressed in a metaphor (*partir tout seul en croisière*), whilst those left behind are *comme chiens galeux*, a variation on Renaud's statement that *tu nous laisses avec les chiens*. The mild, reproachful tone is now complemented by references to the natural setting:

T'aurais pu rêver encore un peu
Te laisser bercer près de la rivière
Par le chant de l'eau courant sur les pierres
Quand des quatre fers l'été faisait feu

T'aurais pu rêver encore un peu
Sous mon châtaignier à l'ombre légère
Laisser doucement le temps se défaire
Et la nuit tomber sur la vallée bleue

The simple sights of nature are juxtaposed initially alongside yet another image of heat. The locution *faire feu des quatre fers* would normally be associated with a 'lively' or 'frisky' horse but here it is the summer which, figuratively speaking, is making the sparks fly. The reference to the chestnut tree recalls an earlier song of Ferrat's entitled *Le Châtaignier* in which the tree – reincarnated in the form of timbers in the singer's house – is personified as it sings of its origins whilst offering protection against the inclement weather of winter. The affectionately recalled natural setting in *Tu aurais pu vivre* also suggests the protective role of the tree as day ebbs gently into night. It is this peaceful scene which is associated with the departed friend, as are the reminiscences of games of *pétanque* evoked in the next two verses:

Tu aurais pu jouer encore un peu
Au lieu de lâcher tes boules peuchère[14]
Aujourd'hui sans toi comment va-t-on faire
Dans notre triplette on n'est plus que deux

Tu aurais pu jouer encore un peu
Ne pas t'en aller sans qu'on ait pu faire
A ces rigolos mordre la poussière
Avec un enjeu du tonnerre de Dieu

The game described here is often associated with older people for whom the long summer days in particular are filled with competitive matches, at village level and beyond, in which rivalry can become extremely intense. Ferrat was sixty-one years old when he published this song and what is evoked – the sudden loss of a

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valued team member – is something which will strike a chord with many French people of the older generations. The integration of an oath of anger or frustration in the syntax (*tonnerre de Dieu*) echoes Mey's *Bon Dieu* but remains a rare (somewhat blasphemous) mention of God in the songs examined.

The song is about to come full circle. After two verses introduced by the gentle admonishment *Tu aurais pu rire encore un peu* and in which the singer describes a lazy, happy life in an idyllic setting, punctuated by the caressing of *nos femmes* and the raising of glasses, the final verse takes up the title of the song, itself reiterated in the first two verses (*Tu aurais pu vivre ↔ rêver ↔ jouer ↔ rire ↔ vivre ↔ encore un peu*):

> Tu aurais pu vivre encore un peu
> Ne pas m'imposer d'écrire ces vers
> Toi qui savais bien mon ami si cher
> A quel point souvent je suis paresseux
> Tu aurais pu vivre encore un peu

The final, gentle reproach reinforces the bond between the dead man and the singer who has been forced to renounce his idle habits and commemorate the passing in the words of the song.

It is, then, an act of commemoration which forms a link between the majority of the songs analysed: the loss of a friend or of an acquaintance is a source of inspiration shared by Mey, Cabrel, Duteil, Renaud and Ferrat; Béart's exceptional song, *Le Quidam*, places death at a greater distance and introduces gentle humour and irony.

Another common feature of most of the songs is, as we have seen, the use of elemental, religious and natural imagery, sometimes enriched by polyvalency. The desire to ask questions of the dead is another shared feeling, as is the need to have recourse to oaths which range from the affectionately mild to the decidedly vulgar. Although death itself is often alluded to euphemistically and even though it is extremely rare to name the deceased, the selected songs illustrate a willingness – almost an eagerness – on the part of our performers to record orally their feelings about death and to give public expression to their private grief, using a range of stylistic registers to do so. The result is a number of thematically and imagistically related but essentially personal songs which form an integral part of a much wider contemporary and historically-based repertoire. Even in death, *la chanson française* is – as always – alive and well.

Notes

1. 85% of the songs played on Skyrock, for example, are in English, according to Lucien Rioux in *50 ans de chanson française* (Paris, L'Archipel, 1992, 8). Since January of this year, however, all radio and television stations in France have been legally obliged to limit this percentage to 40.
2. Léo Ferré (1916–1993) died after Rioux wrote these words.
3. Rioux, op. cit., 8–9.
4. The essential characteristics of the *chanson rive gauche* are, according to Chantal Brunschwig, Louis-Jean Calvet and Jean-Claude Klein in *Cent ans de chanson française* (Paris, Seuil, 1981, 7), 'la part belle faite au texte («poétique», comme il se devait) et la pauvreté mélodique, harmonique et rythmique'.
5. Rioux, op. cit., 9.
6. Other themes which are treated more cautiously in the English-speaking world but which figure prominently in the work of contemporary French singers include: explicit descriptions of sexual relations, androgyny, sadomasochism, the 'public' denunciation of prominent, named individuals and attacks on the very media which promote *la chanson française*. Singers such as Mylène Farmer, Guy Béart, Gainsbourg, Renaud and Jean Ferrat immediately spring to mind.
7. Frederik Mey, *Frederik Mey Vol. 4* (LP) (Productions PERIDES, 13 NP 631); Francis Cabrel, *Cabrel 77-87* (LP) (CBS, CBS54605811); Guy Béart, *Guy Béart de toujours* (2 CDs) (Disques Temporel, 10063–2); Yves Duteil, *Yves Duteil* (LP) (Pathé Marconi/EMI, 2 C068–14498); Renaud, *Putain de camion* (tape) (Virgin, 50600 PM464); Jean Ferrat, *Ferrat 91, Dans la jungle ou dans le zoo* (CD) (Disques Temey, 174 424.2).
8. As is the case with most of Mey's songs, there is a German version of *Dédé Slovinski* which has the title *Atze Lehmann*; see Reinhard Mey (the name under which he is known in Germany), *Alle Lieder von Anfang an bis heute*, Voggenreiter Verlag (Bonn-Bad

Godesberg, n.d., 70). Unfortunately, Mey seems to have disappeared from the French scene and his recorded work tends not to be displayed in French record shops nowadays.

9. Verlaine's

Il pleure dans mon coeur
Comme il pleut sur la ville (*Romances sans paroles*)

finds musical echoes in Frederik Mey's *Il neige au fond de mon âme*. An earlier American example is Buddy Holly's *Raining in my heart*.

10. It is interesting to compare the image constructed here through a reference to a church to the one generated in Cabrel's *Je pense encore à toi*, where the singer laments lost love:

Je suis entré dans l'église
Et je n'y ai vu personne
Que le regard éteint du plâtre des statues
Je connais un endroit où il n'y a rien au-dessus
Je pense encore à toi

Religious images permeate the work of Cabrel and would be worthy of study in themselves.

11. Béart does, of course, treat death far more seriously in other songs, for example *Mourir en vacances*, in which the depressed, lonely narrator plans his own suicide by slashing his wrists whilst on holiday.

12. See *Quid 1993* (Paris, Bernard Laffont, 1386).

13. Thierry Séchan, *Nos Amis les chanteurs* (Paris, Société d'édition Les Belles Lettres, 1992, 94).

14. Peuchère: 'forme francisée de *pécaïre* (. . .) (Provence) Exclamation exprimant une commisération affectueuse ou ironique' (*Le Petit Robert* [Paris, S.N.L – Dictionnaire le Robert, 1979, 1417 and 1384]). The region is entirely in keeping with the game of *pétanque* (otherwise referred to as *boules*) but it is interesting to note that when he wrote the song in 1991, Ferrat had already been living for some time in the Ardèche.

NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY !

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The BBC French Experience 1996

Joan Keevill BBC Education

Autumn 1994 saw the arrival of *The French Experience 1*, the long-awaited replacement for *A vous la France*, which has sold some half million copies to date and continues to be popular. Now this autumn sees the launch of *The French Experience 2* course which accompanies the television series of the same name first broadcast in January this year. Part two is an intermediate course for adult learners who have followed a beginners' course such as *French Experience 1*. It has two primary purposes: to enable learners to take their speaking, understanding, reading and writing of French a stage further and to introduce learners to French-speaking countries around the world in addition to France itself.

Background

So why a francophone French slant? I remember being asked to justify this to the Executive Producer for Languages some three years ago, when the idea was still a twinkle in our eyes. The potential was enormous, if we could convince the powers that be to invest the extra funding that would be needed to enable filming to take place in more faraway and therefore more expensive locations. Our colleagues in the Schools Department had set a trend with the excellent *Jeunes Francophones*. We succeeded and the production team began to plan for variations in temperature of up to 50 degrees, as the recce and filming trips took them from Quebec in winter to Guadeloupe and Senegal. Those of you who have seen the television programmes will agree that the end result is a fascinating insight into the francophone world. The course offers a very varied and rich opportunity for learners to advance their knowledge of the French language and the French-speaking world.

Broadcasts

The 10 fifteen-minute **television programmes** had their first broadcast from January 1996 on BBC1 on Sunday mornings. Their role is to widen viewers' and learners' horizons, going beyond France to explore three very different parts of the French-speaking world: three very different countries linked by their deep attachment to the French language and culture. They are:

- Senegal, one of a number of France's former colonies in West Africa for which French provides a means of communication between the different ethnic groups within the country and also outside, with France and other more industrialised countries;
- the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, with its rich mix of races, all French citizens inhabiting a tiny piece of France 4000 miles from the mainland;
- Quebec, a focal point of new developments in the French language as it responds to the pressures of the English-speaking world which surrounds it.

The television series develops on the language taught in Part 1 and offers a mix of scenes teaching useful language, information about the countries featured and short film reports on interesting or unusual people and places. Each programme is based around a central theme illustrated in two or three of the countries (and echoed in the course book), thus enabling some interesting and revealing comparisons to be made. The transcript of the series is available (cost £3) from The French Experience 2

TV Transcripts, PO Box 7, London W5 2GQ, with cheques made payable to BBC Education.

Francophonie, the series of five **radio programmes** which are part of the course, was first broadcast December 1995 to February 1996 on Radio 4 LW, and opens with a francophonie quiz, followed by four additional programmes on francophone countries. Each programme is almost entirely in French and includes three typical learners who interact with the presenter in studio, Alan Wilding. Interviews from various francophone countries abound, full of interesting facts and figures as well as comprehension questions to aid understanding.

Transmission details

The whole of series 2 is to be repeated en bloc on BBC2's The Learning Zone in the autumn, along with a repeat of the radio programmes, to coincide with the launch of the publication. There were a few raised eyebrows once it became known that the course materials would not be published with the first transmission. We did have advance knowledge of this and could have asked to delay the first transmission until the autumn but decided to go ahead and show the television series as scheduled, accompanied only by the TV transcripts. This has meant that there is already a high level of awareness amongst tutors about the imminent arrival of the new course. We are sending out sample materials to tutors who are interested in knowing more about the course and also plan to do some research amongst a sample of the 2,000 or so people who have ordered the transcripts to analyse the proportion of tutors as against individuals who have purchased them. This will enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of the promotional mailing to heads of languages in institutions which we did just before Christmas.

Details are correct at the time of going to press but please consult listings magazines or BBC Education Information for confirmation.

The French Experience 2 television
BBC2 The Learning Zone
Monday 30 September, 4.30–5.00 am: programmes 1 and 2;
Monday 7 and 14 October, 4.00–5.00 am: programmes 3 to 10.
Francophonie
Radio 4 Long Wave
Sundays 9.30–10.00 pm
6, 13, 20, 27 October and 3 November.

Learning materials

The main teaching and learning materials come in the course book and the four seventy-five minute accompanying audio cassettes. These are available from all good bookshops or on mail order through the BBC, using the order form in the languages catalogue or in On Course.

The course book

Used together with the audio, this contains all the material needed for the learner to follow the course on their own or in a class. Divided into ten units, each unit comprises the following sections:

A l'écoute: six pages of audio based input to develop listening skills and featuring varied activities to help comprehension, give practice and aid production.

Découverte: four pages of reading based input to develop reading comprehension and featuring a wide range of realia, newspaper and other texts with activities as above.

Echange: based on transactional language and featuring extended role-play activities.

Profil: an audio based profile of an interesting individual or institution which gives an insight into the francophone world.

Horizons: a text based introduction to the many different francophone countries, including the DOM-TOM, Vietnam, Canada, Guadeloupe and Senegal.

In addition, there is a four page self-assessment unit every second unit. As with other BBC language courses, there are language and cultural background notes throughout the units and comprehensive 'end matter' including the text of conversations on the cassettes and full reference sections of grammar, vocabulary and answers to exercises.

The language functions and topics covered in the units are as follows:

1. Langues et pays
Talking about the languages you speak and how well, arranging to meet someone, fixing an appointment.
2. Origines et logements
Talking about your origins and background, saying where you live and how you came to be there, talking about your home, looking for property, booking a hotel.
3. Argent
Talking about money and what you spend it on, enquiring about costs and prices, doing business at the bank.
4. Environnements
Talking about your home town, saying what you think of it, talking about the weather and using forecasts, buying a guide book.
5. Gastronomie
Shopping for food, talking about eating habits, describing dishes and understanding recipes, eating out.
6. Métiers
Talking about job, training and working conditions, understanding qualifications required for a job, applying for a job, preparing a CV and taking part in a mob interview.
7. Générations
Talking about your family, generations and roles, talking about friendship and personal relationships, locating people using the Minitel, using the telephone system.
8. Transports et voyages
Talking about travel, routes and timetables, comparing different ways of travelling, bookings and fares, using the car, coping with a breakdown.
9. Sociétés
Talking more about your origins and background, comparing lifestyles in different societies, putting forward an argument and stating opinions.
10. Loisirs
Discussing your spare time pursuits, talking about holidays, difficulties and problems while away from home.

The audio

The course book is accompanied by fully integrated audio on four 75 minute cassettes. These are packed with language explanations in English (for the unsupported learner), carefully graded opportunities for listening, understanding and speaking and real life conversations in French to show the spoken language in everyday use. The conversations are with people in France, Belgium, Switzerland and the Ivory Coast.

Course team

The overall course consultant is Anny King of The Language Centre, Cambridge University; the authors are Mike Garnier and Jeanine Picard, both of The University of the West of England, Bristol. Our thanks go to all of them for their patience in meeting the exacting demands of the BBC Language Unit.

NEW

The French Experience: Know-how BBC2 The Learning Zone

Further to popular demand, we have been able to repackage the *Savoir dire* teaching scenes from both television series for viewers to The Learning Zone. Initially, these compilations will be short 'fillers' to follow on from *Greek Language and People* and will be broadcast at approximately 4.50–5.00 am on Mondays 5, 12, 19 and 26 August and 2 September.

Subsequent compilations will be 60 minutes and 30 minutes duration, broadcast on 9 September (4.00–5.00 am) and 16 September (4.30–5.00 am). At the time of going to press, it is not clear if a separate publication to accompany these compilations will be produced.

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News and Notes

La XVIe Biennale de la langue française choisit les autoroutes de l'avenir

La XVIe Biennale de la langue française s'est tenue à Bucarest du 20 au 24 août 1995 sous la présidence de Roland Eluerd et en présence de son président fondateur Alain Guillermou. Le lieu était particulièrement bien choisi puisque la Roumanie a affirmé depuis longtemps et réaffirmé depuis peu sa vocation francophone et que, heureuse coïncidence, Alain Guillermou fin connaisseur de la langue et de la culture roumaines a pu faire partager aux biennalistes ses connaissances et son enthousiasme en la matière.

Un Thème d'Avant-Garde

Le thème, **la place du français sur les autoroutes de l'information**, frappait heureusement par son actualité et son avant-gardisme. Pas question de s'attendrir sur les reculs du français ici ou là, mais plutôt de s'engager résolument sur ces voies de communications toutes récentes et encore à tracer, en appréciant les enjeux scientifiques, culturels et politiques pour la langue française et ses usagers. Malgré les aspects techniques et le caractère parfois ingrat du sujet, les biennalistes ont manifesté un grand intérêt pour ces questions.

Rappelons que l'expression «autoroutes de l'information» est due au sénateur américain Al Gore (aujourd'hui vice-président des USA). Elle fut utilisée pour la première fois en 1978. Ces «inforoutes», comme on les appelle aussi, envisagent de relier en un seul réseau informatique tous les ordinateurs de la planète, qu'ils desservent les bureaux, les écoles, les bibliothèques ou les particuliers. Ainsi, chacun pourrait accéder au courrier électronique (E-Mail), au visiophone et aux banques (ou bases) de données (fichiers, logiciels...). Les avantages des inforoutes seraient nombreux: communications rapides, lointaines, de grandes quantités d'informations à moindres frais (grâce au passage par le numérique), interactivité (communication dans les deux sens), multimédia (possibilité de traiter le texte, l'image animée et inanimée, le son)... Certains estiment que la connectivité universelle est déjà pratiquement effectuée dans la communauté scientifique, qu'il en serait bientôt de même pour les universitaires et qu'on peut penser que le commerce et l'industrie suivront.

Internet

La première inforoute, Internet, est née dans les années 70, son créateur est Vinton Cerf. Elle compte aujourd'hui 30 millions d'utilisateurs à travers le monde (on en prévoit 100 millions en l'an 2000) et elle se développe très rapidement. La France est raccordée à Internet depuis le 28 juillet 1988. On estime qu'il y a deux fois moins d'internautes (abonnés à Internet) français que d'allemands, trois fois moins que d'anglais et vingt fois moins que d'américains. Pour s'y raccorder, il faut disposer d'un micro-ordinateur équipé d'un CD-Rom et d'un modem relié à une ligne téléphonique et s'abonner à un serveur qui permet d'accéder à Internet.

Dangers et Enjeux

Le processus paraît simple, mais les conditions d'accès diffèrent d'un endroit à un autre à cause de l'infrastructure et des conditions économiques. Ainsi, actuellement on estime que 10% des familles européennes seulement disposent d'un ordinateur contre 35% des familles américaines (50% des adolescents amércains). Que dire alors des Africains dont les réseaux téléphoniques sont souvent rudimentaires ou mal entretenus. On le constate: les chances de bénéficier des autoroutes de la communication sont loin d'être égales pour tous. Elles risquent d'augmenter le fossé entre les privilégiés (monde occidental) et les démunis de l'info (tiers-monde). D'autres exclus seront ceux qui n'auront pas bénéficié d'une éducation et d'une formation régulière renforcée par une formation permanente. L'écart des revenus ira en s'accentuant.

D'autre part, les autoroutes de l'information vont devenir le lieu privilégié des enjeux politiques, industriels (technologiques, fibres optiques) économiques, sociaux . . . L'aspect culturel apparaît comme secondaire, mais il n'en est pas moins présent. Ne va-t-on pas, comme pour le cinéma, vers un renforcement de l'américanisation de la nouvelle société, vers un nivellement des autres cultures? Les inforoutes seraient-elles un nouveau cheval de Troie ?

Une menace pour le français?

Et la langue française dans tout cela? Soyons réalistes et positifs. Elle sera d'autant plus présente que les francophones seront nombreux sur ces réseaux et d'autant plus que les francophones utiliseront leur langue dans ces communications. Il n'est pas question d'adopter une attitude passéiste (qui ne servirait d'ailleurs à rien), mais il est nécessaire d'être vigilant et de former les nouvelles générations à l'utilisation des inforoutes. Il faut commencer par la formation des formateurs. Etre branché prendra alors un sens de plus.

Le lieu où se déroulera la XVIIe Biennale n'a pas encore été choisi, mais Bucarest fera date dans l'histoire des Biennales à la fois par le futurisme de son thème, par la cordialité des participants roumains et par l'ardeur qu'ils ont manifestée pour l'enseignement du français.

Roland Delronche

Reprinted from 'L'Univers du français' Dec. 1995. Lettre Trimestrielle de la FIPF.

Two useful dictionaries

Readers will find two dictionaries of fairly recent vintage handy tools and, at the same time, sources of considerable amusement: *Le Gros Dico des Tout Petits* by Claude-Alain Duhamel and Carole Balaz is a collection of '3000 mots racontés par les enfânts'. This dictionary contains wonderfully simple definitions of often quite difficult concepts as expressed by 5 to 6 year old children. As the introduction says 'Les 3006 mots qu'il comporte, sélectionnés avec la collaboration de nombreux enseignants, psychologues et linguistes, ont été soumis à 17 000 filles et garçons dans plus de 200 écoles maternelles de Paris et de la province. L'ensemble compose un état étonnant de la langue française, mais témoigne aussi du monde dans lequel vivent les enfants d'aujourd'hui.' The often lucid, simple definitions provided could be very useful for the struggling teacher seeking to convey meaning 'in the target language'. In addition the selection is a good guide to frequency as each word is followed by a figure indicating the percentage of 5 to 6 year olds who knew the word. The dictionary is given an additional charm since each word entry is concluded by an imaginative and indeed poetic definition from one or other of the contributors. 'Ce dictionnaire encouragera toutes sortes de lectures – pédagogique, linguistique, sociologique et, non la moindre, poétique – car, ainsi que les enfants eux-mêmes l'affirment: **UN MOT**: 'Ça veut dire plein de choses.' The 'Dico' is published by Livres de Poche at 48F.

The second dictionary is *Le Dico Français-Français, le Livre-Décodeur* by Philippe Vandel also published by Livres de Poche. The intention of this work is clearly expressed by Philippe Vandel who is a 30 year old journalist on *Canal* +. It is 'pour décoder, comprendre et parler les langages du Show-biz, des Footballeurs, des Flics . . . des Grands-parents et même des tout derniers Communistes.'

Both these dictionaries are highly recommended for all those who like to keep up with changes and new introductions in the language.

La terminologie en France

Published by the Union Latine *La Terminologie en France* gives up-to-date information on the state of the French language. In the 1995 issue there is a short article on 'Quelques étapes clés de la langue française' dating from 842 Le serment de Strasbourg. It also contains 'Les rectifications de l'orthographe'. Price 180F.

Eurotunnel Exhibition Centre

The Exhibition Centre at Folkestone (St Martin's Plain), just off the M20, continues to have attractions for school parties who might call in on their way to the Tunnel itself. Channel Tunnel Day Trip packages are advertised at low prices from £8.80 per person from October to March and £10 per person for April to September. This price includes a tour of the Exhibition and a day (return!) trip with Le Shuttle. Telephone 01303 270111 for full details.

Sign of the times

50 millions de Consommateurs (the French *Which?*) has had a change of title and now appears on the bookstalls as '*60 millions de Consommateurs*'. A twelve month subscription in the UK costs 289F from 36, rue de Picpus, 75012 PARIS.

Une Vie de prof

A fairly recently released video in France is the harrowing Canal + film, *Une Vie de prof* which is highly recommended to all British teachers of French. Issued as 'un document d'utilité publique', having received the 'FIPA d'Or 94 du Grand Reportage' it sets out in 90 minutes to present a fly on the wall view of one full school year of filming at the Collège De Geyter in Saint-Denis. Only by maintaining continuity over the full school year is it possible to appreciate the difficulties and disarray faced by the school staff, difficulties which result in the sacking of the Head and in the production of an eighteenth century opera staged and video recorded in Ancient Greek costume! Throughout the staff simply make a case to be treated as human beings worthy of consideration by their pupils and by their senior management. Essential viewing for all, including Years 12 and 13 students. The film, of course, is available only in SECAM which means only black and white viewing unless you have a dual standard PAL/SECAM video machine.

Un Congrès Mondial

La FIPF organise pour la première fois en Asie du 25 août au 31 août 1996, son IX^e congrès mondial. Forte de ses 125 associations et de ses 60.000 membres répartis dans le monde entier, la FIPF réunira à Tokyo plus de 1 000 participants venus du monde entier. Le thème de ce IX^e congrès *Tracer l'avenir, Cultiver la différence* entend illustrer les deux défis auxquels le français sera confronté à l'aube du XXI^e siècle.

Un Congrès au Japon

Tracer l'avenir, Cultiver la différence, en élisant le Japon pour son IX^e Congrès mondial, la FIPF a souhaité confronter l'avenir du français avec celui d'un pays où tout à la fois s'invente le XXI^e siècle et se respectent la tradition et les marques de la différence. Ce premier congrès de la FIPF en Asie participe aussi au renouveau et au développement d'une francophonie asiatique: il précède la tenue de la prochaine Conférence des pays ayant en partage l'usage du français qui se tiendra au Vietnam en 1997; il s'inscrit dans le cadre du développement rapide des échanges politiques, économiques et culturels dans cette partie du monde; il illustre enfin la volonté d'un maintien de l'équilibre entre avant-garde et tradition.

Un Enjeu et Plusieurs Défis

- Affirmer le pluralisme culturel et linguistique face au défi de l'uniformisation, à l'émergence des grands ensembles continentaux, aux revendications identitaires et à la montée des nationalismes;
- Débattre de l'avenir du français dans un contexte géolinguistique en mouvement;
- Réfléchir sur les raisons politiques,

économiques, culturelles, identitaires qui peuvent conduire à choisir le français comme langue d'apprentissage;
- Préciser le contenu du message que le français entend véhiculer aujourd'hui et qui motive son apprentissage;
- Engager une réflexion sur le mouvement associatif et sur une nouvelle définition de ses mission.

Politiques du français

Table ronde en séance plénière animée par Louis-Jean Calvet avec la participation des représentants des gouvernements français belge, canadien, suisse, etc.

Le français et le développement économique

Conférence donnée par Jean-Daniel Tordjman, suivie d'une table ronde avec la participation d'hommes d'affaires et de chefs d'entreprise.

La littérature francophone

Conférences et table ronde avec: Andrei Makine, Daniel Pennac, Raphaël Confiant, Antonine Maillet, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Ismaël Kadaré, Henri Lopes, etc.

La francophonie aujourd'hui

Conférences données par Michel Serres et Jean-Marc Léger.

Rôle des associations de professeurs

«L'avenir de la FIPF»: table ronde animée par Annie Monnerie-Goarin avec des présidents d'associations.

Nouvelles orientations de la politique du français dans le monde

Forums régionaux animés par les Présidents des commissions régionales et les acteurs de la politique du français.

Le Japon et la francophonie

Conférences données par des intellectuels de renom. Exposition sur l'histoire des relations culturelles franco-japonaises.

Nous espérons fournir à nos lecteurs dans un prochain numéro un compte-rendu et des Impressions du Congrès. (Ed.)

REPEAT

The French Experience 1: subtitled and unsubtitled repeats

Tutors and teachers in schools and colleges may be interested to know that series 1 is to be repeated without subtitles on Friday mornings on BBC2 during term time next autumn and the following spring, on Friday mornings on BBC2. This means that it can be used with advanced learners and will provide an interesting and up-to-date source of documentary information which is thematically compiled. However, before we receive complaints again from those members of the general audience who are studying French for the first time and probably without access to a tutor (quote: it might as well be Russian for all I understand!), it needs to be said that this series will be repeated with subtitles on Mondays on The Learning Zone from January 1997.

So, welcome to the BBC's French Experience. We hope you enjoy it with your students and that they, too, will welcome this wider, multicultural view of the French language and the many French-speaking cultures in the francophone world.

Further information

If you would like to know more about any of the programmes and resources referred to above, or if you would like a BBC languages catalogue, please contact: BBC Education Information, London W12 7TS, tel: 0181-746 1111 (an answerphone operates outside office hours).

Books and Materials received

The following books and materials have been received from the publishers. Titles marked * are available for review by telephoning 0113 267 9258 after 6 pm.

* **Route Nationale Stage 4.** L. Briggs, B. Goodman-Stephens and P. Rogers. *Nelson. 1995.*

Route Nationale Stage 4 covers KS 4 and prepares students for examination at 16+. It provides six terms of study for all abilities in a single volume.
The following materials are available, although not all have been sent for review.

Student's book	*ISBN 0 17 439827 1 £8.25*
Teacher's file	*ISBN 0 17 439828 X £17.95*
Copymasters -	*ISBN 0 17 439828 X £50.00 + VAT*
4 cassettes	*all at £15.95 + VAT each*
Activity box	*ISBN 0 17 439834 4 £67.50 + VAT*
Video cassettes	*ISBN 0 17 439835 2 £99.95 + VAT*
Video teacher's notes	*ISBN 0 17 439838 7 £5.95*

* **Maxilire.** Series editor: Marie-Thérèse Bougard. *Longman. March 1996. ISBN 0 582 27692 6. £47.50 + VAT.*
Written for the lower to middle end of years 7 to 9. Maxilire is designed for slow learners and pupils with learning difficulties. Pack of twenty readers, with a Teacher's support book.

* **French Culture at the Liberation 1944–1947.** Michael Kelly and Rosemary Böck. *University of Southampton. 1996. CD-ROM. £37.60.*
This CD aims to provide an accessible source of information from the Normandy Landings to the onset of the Cold War, including books, articles, films, images, music and plays.
System requirements: Multimedia PC or compatible PC with 386SX or higher processor (486DX2 recommended) CD-ROM drive
SVGA resolution monitor with 256 colours or higher
8 MB of RAM (16 MB recommended)
At least 1 MB of hard disc space
Microsoft Windows operating system version 3.1 or later
MS- DOS tm operating system version 3.1 or later & Microsoft Mouse or compatible pointing device.
Copies of the licence agreement. and installation instructions are Included.

* **Je t'écoute.** Richard Marsden. *John Murray 1995.*

Book	*ISBN 0 7195 7113 8 £ 6.99*
Two cassettes	*ISBN 0 7195 7115 4 £ 24.00 + VAT*

Intermediate listening practice with some opportunities for oral and written work.

* **Temoignages d'Entrepreneurs.** Edited by Nicole Catani. *Cardiff Institute of Higher Education. 1996. Avec la permission de Radio France. £135 for educational organisations, £235 for non-educational.*
Featuring extracts from the Radio France economic affairs programme 'Rue des Entrepreneurs', the materials comprise a 1 hour 10 minute cassette with extracts from the radio programme and a ring binder containing three sections: travail personnel, élements de réponse and transcriptions.

* **Glasgow Introductory Guides to French Literature.**
Verne – Le Tour du Monde en Quatre-vingts Jours. Timothy Unwin. *ISBN 0*

85261 292 3. £3.75.

Ayme – Uranus and **La Tête des Autres.** Christopher Lloyd. *ISBN 0 85261 445 4. £3.95.*

Djian – 37 3 Le Matin. David Platten. *ISBN 0 85261 368 7. £3.95.*

Rostand – Cyrano De Bergerac. Edward Freeman. *ISBN 0 85261 467 5. £3.95.*

Sagan – Bonjour Tristesse. Heather Lloyd. *ISBN 0 85261 469 1. £3.95.*

*** Grant and Cutler Critical Guides to French Texts.**

Zola – Thérèse Raquin. – Russell Cousins. *ISBN 0 7293 0345 4. £4.50.*

Mauriac – Le Noeud de Vipères. K.M. McKilligan. *ISBN 0 7293 0358 6. £4.50.*

*** Neothèque.** Sue Hewer. *Collins Educational. ISBN 0 00 320148 1. £99.00.*

A progressive reading scheme, for 11–14 years. There are three levels of difficulty, allowing for realistic progression.

All the readers were first published in France or other Francophone countries. Thirty-six readers. 44 pages of photocopiable material and a User Guide are all contained in a tough plastic case.

*** The Politics of Fun: Cultural Policy and Debate in Contemporary France.** David L. Looseley. *Berg. 1995. ISBN 1 85973 013 2. £34.95.*

Contemporary policies for the arts in France and the cultural and political issues they have raised.

Do you have a new book, product, course or service you would like to promote to the language market? The Association for Language Learning has a number of interesting opportunities to help you do this. Contact the Advertising Manager now for further details.

Tel: 01788 546443 Fax: 01788 544149

*** French Business.** *Berlitz. 1996. ISBN 2 8315 5155 2. £10.95.* One 75-minute Business Phrase cassette, complete transcript and a phrase book/dictionary. Covers a wide variety of business situations, including introducing yourself, making appointments, managing meetings, etc.

*** Mot à Mot: A New Advanced French Vocabulary.** Paul Humberstone. *Hodder and Stoughton. Second edition 1996. ISBN 0 340 65523 2.* Originally published in 1991 and now revised, updated and expanded, this vocabulary guide provides support for modern topic-based syllabuses.

*** Triangle.**

Series published by Didier Erudition for the Goethe Institut, the British Council and ENS – CREDIF.

Number 10: The role of translation in foreign language teaching

Number 12: The European dimension in pre- and in-service language teacher development

Number 13: Subject learning and teaching in a foreign language

Price: 130 FF each from Didier Erudition. 6 rue de la Sorbonne, 75005 Paris.

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Reviews

Oral/Ecrit: Entraînez vous.
Niveau débutant. Evelyne Bérard et Christian Lavenne. *ISBN 9 782090 333383. £6.55. Niveau intermédiaire.* Jacqueline Jacquet et Michèle Pendanx. *ISBN 9 782090 333367. £6.55. Clé International. 1994. Distributed in the UK by European Schoolbooks Ltd. Tapes not sent for review.*

With revised GCSEs looming, the search is on for materials that help prepare pupils for an exam in which the questions and answers will largely be in French and where there is some integration of language skills. An obvious source would appear to be books written in French by French authors and published in France for the second language market.

These two books have something to offer students of GCSE. They are specifically intended for learners of French as a foreign language and the instructions are in clear, simple French with icons at the side of each exercise to clarify what the task involves. Each is set out as a workbook, and there is a variety of test types. Answers are given in the back of the book. The transcripts at the back of each book suggest a level of aural comprehension equivalent to GCSE, from Basic to Higher Level.

This is not, however, a strictly progressive course, and one of its major disadvantages lies in its emphasis on grammar, particularly at the *Niveau débutant*. Chapter 2, for example, which practises aural identification of *être* and *avoir*, introduces a bewildering array of object pronouns, conjunctions and the perfect tense. The other eleven chapters are specifically intended to cover other grammar topics from the partitive article to the imperative. There is some communicative exploitation of the grammar topics – an exercise requiring a telephone message to be taken in the future tense, for exarnple, and the preparation of a questionnaire to practise question forms – but the ethos of the book is such that an 11 year old would find it hard to stomach, although an adult learner may well find it stimulating.

The *Niveau intermédiaire* focuses more on communication and topics relevant to GCSE, with fourteen chapters which include travel, the world of work and cinema. There is also a chapter on dreaming and one on poetry which would go some way to fulfilling National Curriculum and GCSE requirements for creativity in language learning. While each chapter has a grammar element, the emphasis is placed much more firmly on aural comprehension, particularly for gist and an interpretation of events, as is required at the Higher Level at GCSE. Authentic written texts – newspaper articles, cinema listings and adverts, for example – also help exploit the topic and practise all the language skills. In fact, this level probably has enough suitable material in it to occupy a significant proportion of a final GCSE year.

While these two books would seem to come as an integrated course, the *Niveau intermédiaire* is most likely to be of use in a school GCSE course. The *Niveau débutant* would probably be more appropriate to adults working on their own or at an evening class.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts.

Collection 'Lecture Facile'. *Hachette.*
Alain Prost. *Niveau 1. ISBN 9 782011 549907. £3.60. 64 pp.*
L'Auvergne. *Niveau 2. ISBN 9 782011 550194. £3.60. 80 pp.*

La Provence. *Niveau 2. ISBN 9 782011 550033. £3.60 80 pp.*
Le Cinéma français aujourd'hui. *Niveau 3. ISBN 9 782010 206269. £3.75. 96 pp.*
Albert Camus. *Niveau 3. ISBN 9 782011 550026. £3.75 80 pp.*
Distributed in the UK by European Schoolbooks Ltd.

These five books come from a series of easy readers apparently intended for French schoolchildren but of possible value to English-speaking secondary school pupils studying French as a foreign language. Currently, there are 34 books in the series, which is divided into three thematic sections: French life, great literary works (simplified) and famous people. These three sections are further divided into three levels, assuming a knowledge of 500 to 1500+ words.

These readers are substantial books with between 64 and 96 pages (books reviewed) and with approximately 400 words to a page. This makes them value for money, but has the disadvantage that the density of the text and the amount of material presented can seem daunting. Year 11 and good Year 10 pupils should be capable of reading and understanding levels 1 and 2, but may be unlikely to do so, given the minimalist approach many adopt towards their language learning. If the intention is to use these books as a set of class readers, various difficulties present themselves: the cost of multiple copies, the time it will take to read them and the relatively small choice at each level (seven texts at level 1, seventeen at level 2 – of which ten are literary texts, including *Tristan et Iseut* and *Cyrano de Bergerac* – and ten at level 3).

A dedicated French teacher may find a way in which to integrate these readers into a GCSE course, but they are much more likely to find a place in post 16 language learning. Students in Years 12 and 13 are far more likely to tackle these texts, and while they will probably find level 1 simplistic, they may conceivably find it interesting – topics include (apart from *Alain Prost*) *La cuisine française* and *Vincent Van Gogh*. While the simplified literary texts are of dubious value to students pursuing an A Level course with these as set texts, they may well provide non-literature students of French with an easy and practical introduction to reading French literature for pleasure.

The most useful contribution these books can make to the school curriculum is probably as source material for A Level coursework. They are topical and relevant to studies of French culture: *L'Auvergne* and *La Provence*, give a well-researched and interesting insight into the history, geography and culture of these regions, *Le Cinéma français aujourd'hui* has a comprehensive coverage of the history of French cinema from 1958 to 1995, together with the different trends that have emerged and an introduction to the French actors and films that are part of French everyday culture; and *Albert Camus* explores, succinctly, the background to the writer's life and works. Each book has a list of useful words and expressions connected with the topic which will enlarge the student's vocabulary.

Although only 5 of the 34 books in this series were sent for review, some of the other titles can also probably be recommended for a school, sixth form or departmental library. The choice of titles will depend on likely coursework topics, rather than stated level of language, and should prove a useful addition to source material currently available.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts.

Je ne sais quoi. Yannick Schneider. *Minerva Press. 1994. ISBN 1 85863 166 1. £7.99.*

This is a set of verse in English, French and German in a variety of styles. The book could be used firstly for reading for pleasure. The poems are of 'manageable length' for children and would introduce them to a variety of language not usually known in the first stage of language learning. (Some poems would be suitable even for elementary level). Older language learners would most definitely benefit from reading the book for pleasure. Secondly, the poems could be used with a specific purpose, ranging from comprehension activities (true/false exercises, questions) to a study of the grammar used, the themes, or the style of language.

I feel that language learners should be introduced to as many varieties of language as possible, even at an early stage, and the book is a good resource for this. However, to get the most out of the poems, I would suggest that specific tasks be set – even up to 'A' level standard.

Finally, I admire the fact that Yannick Schneider is able to write such poetry in three languages – well worth reading!

REGINA HAGUE
Hinchingbrook School, Huntingdon.

Jeux Faciles En Français Volume 2. *European Language Institute. ISBN 88 85148956. £4.25.*

This is essentially a vocabulary building book, (probably along similar lines to Volume 1) suitable for students of French at elementary level and aimed at children in particular. The book works through 16 themes, for example, months, jobs and sports, introducing approximately 10 items of vocabulary for each theme. The design is bright and the book is full of colourful, fun illustrations for each item and, through games, there is a logical progression of skills required in each section – introduction of vocabulary, recognition (matching pictures to words), writing (in a crossword), and recall (wordsearch).

I think students would possibly tire of the repetitive nature if the book were used too often. However, it would be useful to dip into for a beginners year 7, 8 or 9 group, especially one including weaker children, who, I feel, would respond well to the concentration on only a few items of vocabulary and the fun, easy to follow tasks.

Although this would be a good supplement to a course book, I have reservations about the idea of introducing single items of vocabulary in this way. The choices of 'key' words are sometimes dubious and not necessarily what I would call 'core' language. Is it perhaps also more useful to learn words in context or at least 'je nage' or 'je fais de la natation' rather than 'la natation'?

Finally, Jeux Faciles would be useful to have at hand as the games are straightforward, meaning students can work independently. I wouldn't advise investing in a class set but would suggest it to motivated students to have a go at at home.

REGINA HAGUE
Hinchingbrooke School, Huntingdon.

Essential Business French. C. G. Geoghegan and J. Y. Geoghegan. *Hodder and Stoughton. 1992. ISBN 0 340 56187 4. £4.99.*

This book is aimed at two separate target groups: firstly, the travelling business person working in a French-speaking country and wishing to use key phrases even if their knowledge of French is limited and, secondly, 'second year students' following business related courses. This is a 'dip-into' book, and the material is gathered together under loose headings in alphabetical order 'Accepting, Accidents, Accounts, Advising . . .'). The authors suggest that the collections of phrases which they provide can be used as outline 'scripts' when preparing a specific activity.

I found the computer section particularly thorough but I am pleased to see that the authors pay due attention to attitudes and not just incidents and lists of vocabulary.

There are some pleasing equivalents provided: 'It's a very flat organisation' is rendered as *Il y a peu de hiérarchie* and 'She reports to . . .' becomes *Elle est sous les ordres directs de . . .*

All in all, an inexpensive, sound and useful piece of work, particularly for the first of the two target groups.

H. S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

Teach Yourself French Verbs. Marie-Thérèse Weston. *Hodder and Stoughton. 1994. ISBN 0 340 59816 6. £4.99.*

Here is yet another book of listed material. It contains full coverage of the main tenses for '200 frequently used' verbs, arranged alphabetically, together with a glossary of about 3000 verbs with details of the patterns they follow. One may ask, however, why it is necessary to list all the verb forms in full of, say, abandonner, admirer and casser, when they all clearly follow the regular pattern of -er verbs.

The introductory guide to the use of the book is clear and the explanation of what verbs are and how they work wisely does not assume any level of understanding. Terms such as 'tense' and 'infinitive' are explained. It was odd to see 'If I were you . . .' cited as an example relevant to the subjunctive. Quite clearly French does not use the subjunctive in this circumstance.

To my mind the best feature of the book is the series of expressions at the foot of each page giving examples of the verbs in everyday use, with colloquial expressions based upon them. Thus for admettre we are given, 'Pierre a été admis à ces (?ses) examens' and 'Je n'admets pas qu'on parle sur ce ton'.

This is a useful reference guide and revision tool as useful to the supported student as to the independent learner.

H. S. CHAPMAN
The North West Wales Training and Enterprise Council, Bangor

Le Peuple de France Aujourd'hui. By C. Laudet and R. Cox. *Manchester University Press. 180 pp. ISBN 0 7190 42126 X.*

In a previous review the twin title in this series was reviewed, the conclusion being that the text would certainly benefit undergraduates but could be used, with a fair degree of guidance, by the discerning Sixth Former. I feel that, though this text is basically the same format as 'La Vie Politique en France Aujourd'hui', at pre university level a wider range of ability of student could gain something from either a toedipping session or something a little more substantial.

Population, the family, different social groupings and problems within society form the areas around which texts are explored. I quite like the idea that you have a lead-in text which is then followed by text taken from a contemporary source which is then glossed in the language and followed by comprehension questions. Given time and the right group dynamics my ideal 'Holy Trinity' would be Ardagh's work on modern day France plus this text backed by a myriad of items taken from whatever sources.

Depending what your groups are like, some students could make use of this reference work independently, especially if they want to access a topic fairly swiftly in preparation of a piece of coursework. In other cases much spadework would need to be done in class. Obviously some texts will lend themselves better to Sixth Forms and thus need to be flagged early on for ready reference. One useful text is on how *Beurs* see themselves. It is certainly worth getting copies of 'Le Peuple de France' for the Department and the library and, if resources can stretch that far, a small set of copies for selected groups.

CLIVE THORPE
Framlingham College

Supersubs French. Hazel Rice. *The Chalkface Project. 1986, reprinted 1991. ISBN 1 873562 40 3. Price not given.*

Supersubs French is a photocopiable resource, suitable for Key Stage 3. It includes puzzles, codes, word searches, oral practice and personal writing, all based on topics to be found in most course books: telling the time, weather, clothes, directions, food and drink, shopping and so on.

For example, the section on telling the time begins with matching sentences in French to the clock faces. The pupils are then asked to draw more clock faces and to write the times in French.

They then go on to 'Une journée typique', in which there are true or false statements for them to check, sentences to complete with the correct times and some easy calculations on length of time spent during the day on various activities. This topic is then completed with a short account describing a typical day and a pie chart to illustrate what they have written.

The pack is designed for non-specialists to use when the usual class teacher is absent and in this it succeeds admirably. Answers where appropriate are given in the back of the book and most of the sheets are self-explanatory.

Other Supersubs packs are available on a variety of subjects, all specifically designed for substitute teaching. For more information, contact 'The Chalkface Project', PO Box 907, Milton Keynes, MK13 8YU.

SHEILA SMALLEY
Allerton High School, Leeds

Télé-Textes. Elspeth Broady and Ulrike Meinhof. *Oxford University Press. 1995.*
VHS video (50 minutes) ISBN 0 19 840484 0 £30.00 + VAT
Activity book ISBN 0 19 912200 8 £5.50

The note to the reader is a good base from which to introduce this excellent resource material. It talks about dealing with 'topical issues', 'working in all four skills', 'extending your active command of current affairs vocabulary'. It certainly did that! My previous knowledge of 'remplir l'escorcelle' and 'les geules jeunes' was rather scant!

The material consists of a very user-friendly student's book and a most professionally-produced video. What I liked in particular about this resource was its diversity of approach and the way in which it linked quite naturally all four skills.

There are cloze exercises, 'find the equivalent', 'vrai ou faux', nouns to verbs and vice-versa, to name just a few. The authors have avoided the great danger of presenting material that is soon out-dated. Admittedly the hey-day of the Kareoke is nearly gone but subjects such as weather, terrorism, the environment, food, winter sports, are all issues of a timeless nature.

This is not a transcript book with a few questions and a video, but a resource which includes complementary reading material, grammar exercises, ideas for discussions with essential vocabulary at the end of each unit.

The broadcasts are clear and interesting and naturally authentic, given that they are taken from main French channels. However the problems of understanding French spoken at normal speed are not immediately overcome, even by some judicious exercises. My students found themselves using the material as a listening test as they frantically attempted to fill in the cloze exercises, rarely having the time to enjoy the visual aspects of the broadcast. The newsreaders were clear but interviews such as that with the Mayor of Corsica left the students a little bewildered at times. I also find the level of expectation rather high for 'A' level students. They struggled with new written French, authentically spoken French which then had to be explained in their own words! This brings me to a word of caution. This is not an easy opt-out resource. You know what I mean! Put the video on, give the pupils the book and you can then go and make a cup of coffee and mark the 'Tartuffe' essay. The materials in *Télé-Textes* are excellent, thorough and logical but they need preparation on behalf of the students before the video is seen.

In an age when the television is more popular than the radio, I do believe this to be a valuable resource and one to be used alongside other current material. My students found it refreshing and stimulating, once the initial difficulties had been overcome.

D. J. BUTCHER
Nottingham

Auto Examen Part A. Project leader: Gwen Berwick. Project director: Michael Buckby. Author team includes J. Bates, D. Carter, D. Chamary, R. Hares, T. Huntley and M. Ounsworth.
IT Consultants: S. Hewer and W. Townshend.
Collins Educational.
Student's book *ISBN 0 00 320067 1 £9.50*
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Cassette pack (7) *ISBN 0 00 320069 8 £59.95 + VAT*
Assessment pack *ISBN 0 00 320150 X £27.50*
Copymasters *ISBN 0 00 320070 1 £54.50*

This is the first level of a 2-year course which enables students to prepare for the GCSE or Standard Grade examinations. It is fully in line with the revised National Curriculum requirements for Key Stage 4 and provides full coverage of the GCSE syllabus and a wide range of activities aimed at the top half of the ability range. The materials have been designed for grades A* to D and although differentiation has been built in to cope with that particular range, they would be too demanding for students whose predicted grades fall short of a D.

The student's book is colourful and imaginative, the individual pages slightly over-crowded with photographs, letters, drawings, computer screens, authentic handwriting, maps and so on.

The twelve chapters in the student's book deal with a fairly typical range of topics: looking at future plans, staying at a campsite, shopping for clothes, healthy living, travelling by car, changing money, holidays, stereotypes, relationships, and staying in someone's home. Each chapter contains good advice for the student, written by a GCSE examiner. On page 11, for example, we read: 'Avant d'écouter la cassette, prépare-toi! Lis la question pour savoir exactement quelles informations tu cherches. Tu veux savoir si on parle d'un sujet, par exemple, l'environnement. Attention! Tu n'entendras peut-être pas le mot **environnement** mais est-ce que tu entends d'autres mots sur le même sujet, par exemple le mot **écologique**?' Later, when dealing with a reading comprehension, the examiner's advice is 'Ne t'inquiète pas si tu ne comprends pas chaque mot! Cherche seulement les informations nécessaires.' For preparing a conversation on 'Les tâches ménagères', the advice is: 'N'oublie pas de donner des réponses intéressantes, avec des informations supplémentaires ... dans une vraie conversation, on pose des questions aussi.' Grammar is explained in context and practised in the 'pages jaunes' at the end of the book. Revision is on-going in the student's book and is also presented in the separate workbook.

The Teacher's book contains suggestions for assessment, IT and differentiation and the assessment pack also has suggestions for end of term tests. The cassettes which are copiable, are useful for revision, homework or independent study. They are clear, not too fast and have a good range of voices, especially where young people are involved.

To sum up, this is an impressive range of materials from a well-known source and a leading languages publisher. Even if you have not used the other parts of the 'AUTO' course, this would be a good investment for Years 10 and 11, keeping in mind that it is aimed at the top tiers. It is very much geared towards getting good results in the public examinations, while giving the student interesting and imaginative tasks to do. Part B, available in March 1996, and with a similar range of materials, completes this Key Stage 4 course.

SHEILA SMALLEY
Allerton High School, Leeds

'The Year Abroad': Preparation, Monitoring, Evaluation. Gabrielle Parker, Annie Rouxeville, (eds). *AFLS & CILT. 1995. ISBN 1 874016 526 £10.50.*

It is universally held that students on language and language-related degree courses derive great benefit from undertaking a lengthy period of residence abroad. Such is the sanctity of this sacred cow that its value is rarely questioned. For the best students the experience not only has undoubted benefits for their linguistic competence but it also enables them to deepen their appreciation of the culture of the host country. Unfortunately, not all derive this benefit and, for a significant number, the year abroad can be a traumatic experience causing them to seek companionship with like-minded compatriots and shun contact with the inhabitants of the country of residence.

'The Year Abroad': Preparation, Monitoring, Evaluation brings together a number of contributors with long experience of dealing with the practical aspects of overseas residence for students. Of prime importance, according to the authors, is adequate preparation before departure, in which students are made aware that there will be a period of adjustment, often quite distressing, before benefits will appear. The authors present the strategies operating in their own universities to make students aware of what they are likely to experience when they cross the Channel. Some of these take the form of discussion of personal aims and expectations (which are often unrealis-

tically high), as well as more practical issues such as accommodation or money management. Students are given advice on how best to make contact with 'natives' in what appears for many, at least at first, to be a hostile environment. Students are made aware of cultural diversity and in one university this takes the form of 'ethnographic training'. All authors agree that the role of Final Year students, who have returned from their period abroad, is vital in preparing their younger counterparts for residence in a different culture.

A number of contributors tackle the issue of how the Year Abroad can be evaluated and how the experience gained by students can be assessed. Some chapters discuss the respective value of study placements, work placements and English Language assistantships, while one contributor proposes that for some students the structured study visit is a valuable alternative to the full year of residence abroad.

Twenty years ago students were given little guidance or preparation before going abroad and were more or less told to cross the Channel and get on with it. This volume shows that this is no longer acceptable and that universities must prepare students if they are not going to form English-speaking ghettoes while abroad. The strategies offered for the preparation of students going abroad are above all practical. This, and the advice offered on the evaluation of foreign residence, make this a most valuable volume for all those involved with students undertaking 'The Year Abroad'.

BERNARD FOSTER
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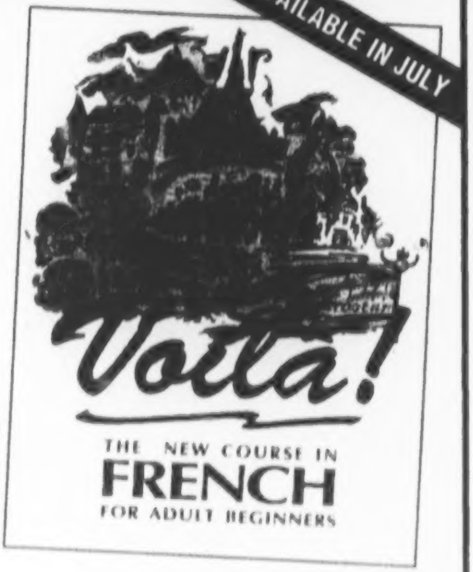

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Notes for contributors

Contributions

The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French.

Articles written in French are particularly welcome.

Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

a) Articles of about 3000 words.
b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (longer reviews or articles may be accepted).

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation

Articles should be submitted either typewritten or on computer disk (plus hard copy)

a) Typewritten: Type with double spacing. Typewriters or word processors should be set at 44 characters (the equivalent of the line length), as this will help the Editor plan the arrangement of the journal. Please send two copies of the article and keep one for yourself. One copy of the article should be 'clean' (with no corrections) to enable the printer to scan it. If there are any changes or corrections these should be made on the second copy.
b) Disk: Send 3½" or 5¼" disks (NB not Amstrad Cf2 disks) in double, single or high density formats. Most word processing packages are acceptable but if you have any query contact the ALL office. Also send in one hard copy of the article with the disk, and keep one for yourself.

Give your article one short title (not a title and a subtitle), and divide it up with brief subheadings.

Give full references for all sources quoted. Journal policy is to put these at the end of the article and not at the bottom of the page.

Illustrations

Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing

In order to be considered for including in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by 1st February and 1st August. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

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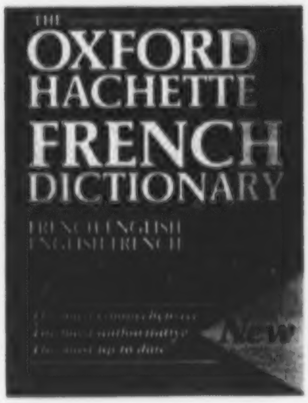
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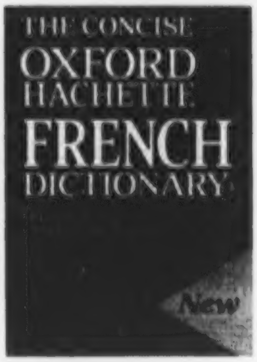
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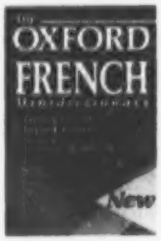
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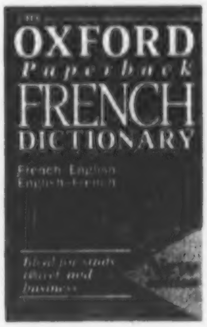
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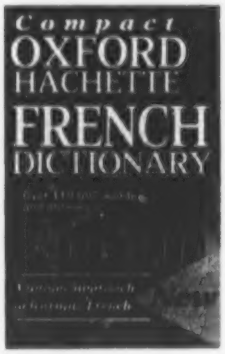
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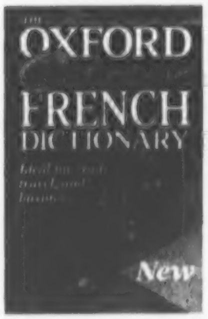
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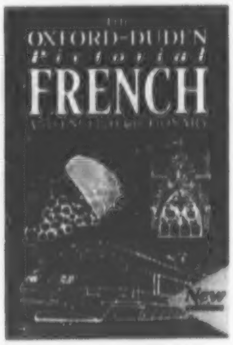
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FRANCOPHONIE JUNE 1996 No. 13

ASSOCIATION for
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FRANCOPHONIE

The French Journal of the Association for Language Learning

The Yorkshire-Lille Exchange –
a new ALL development

Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in the French Classroom

Charles de Gaulle, navigateur métaphorique

DECEMBER 1996
No 14

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ASSOCIATION for
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Refresher course for teachers of French in Provence

22 May - 2 June 1997

For the past 3 years ALL has organised, in collaboration with Campus International at the University of Toulon (Var), a course focussing on life in Provence as it was and as it is now. Inevitably this proved very attractive to Pagnol specialists, and a pack for the use of teachers running A-level classes is currently being compiled from the fruits of their labours.

In 1996 the course was extended to meet the needs of non-specialist teachers of French. The results were so successful that it has been decided to extend the format for 1997.

MAIN FEATURES OF 1997 COURSE

- Course will run from 22 May to 2 June inclusive
- Open to teachers from all sectors (including returners)
- Accommodation in families
- Briefings on contemporary language, culture, society and politics
- Inputs from local specialists
- Time to pursue individual projects (including Pagnol)
- Excursions to Marseille, Aubagne, Hyères and inland
- LINGUA funding

The course is being structured in such a way that participants can undertake almost any project that would benefit from exploring and exploiting one of the most picturesque and lively parts of France, whilst receiving extensive guidance from local experts. Accommodation *en famille* and total immersion in the French language at all times means that quantifiable progress in consolidation or refreshment is effectively guaranteed.

For further details contact:
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Exchange visits to the North of France and Westphalia: a new ALL development

The Editor

Way back in 1947 an Exchange Scheme was set up in the Yorkshire area to enable Yorkshire pupils to spend a period of time in the homes of their French counterparts, after first entertaining a French guest in their own homes in Yorkshire. The Scheme caught on and numbers rose from a small cluster of pupils to a veritable army.

Within a few years the administration had to be taken over by a consortium of local authorities and for more than 40 years this Consortium supported and actively encouraged the Exchange Scheme, together with a parallel scheme to develop exchanges with pupils in Westphalia.

Throughout the period of its existence (some 49 years) the Scheme has been highly successful and we estimate that about 20,000 Yorkshire pupils and a similar number of French pupils have visited each other's homes. Here lies the reason for the success – home to home exchanges which plunge the pupils into a totally authentic linguistic and cultural environment. At all times pupils know they are supported by English resident escorts who are on call for home visits whenever any problem arises.

Alas present day financial pressures on LEAs have forced the members of the Consortium to withdraw one by one. This year the last of the supporting authorities, Wakefield Metropolitan Council, has given notice that it is withdrawing from the Scheme at the end of the 1996 exchanges. This is the biggest blow of all to the Scheme since Wakefield has been for many years the centre for all the administration on the English side.

The Yorkshire Branch of ALL and the South Yorkshire Branch were well represented on the Committee at Wakefield and they expressed their own bitter disappointment and the dismay of the French and German Committees, for it seemed certain that the Scheme would come to an end after 49 years of existence.

In the Yorkshire Branch an unofficial action committee was set up to look into the possibility of saving the Scheme. We were strongly encouraged by French colleagues based in Lille who watched with amazement the withdrawal of LEA support. What a contrast with the solidly based support coming from the *Académie de Lille* and the *Ministère de l'Education nationale*. The first task of the Action Committee was to ensure that there was genuine support in the Branch for any attempt to salvage the Exchange. Having established that there was unanimous support for such an attempt an approach was made to the ALL Executive for an agreement to run the Exchange as an ALL sponsored activity – sponsored but not financed. Such an agreement was obtained and the Yorkshire branch of ALL put forward a proposal to the Committee in Wakefield to take over the running of both the French and German Schemes from September 1996. It was stressed that such a plan could only operate with adequate financial support which would come from the transfer of the accrued reserves to ALL.

In June this year the Chief Education Officer for Wakefield informed us that the Wakefield Education Committee had agreed to the transfer of an initial sum of £10,000 from the reserves and the rest to come in December after the winding up of the Wakefield Committee. With this backing it was considered it was a viable proposition to run the Scheme in a manner similar to that which has operated over many years.

Administration of the Scheme

One point had to be clear from the start. Whilst the majority of ALL Branch members were keen for the Scheme to continue, no one would have the time to take on the administration. This meant that an office and professional administrative staff were needed. Leeds Metropolitan University was willing to support the venture and office space which gives access to reprographics and computers has been offered. Mrs Denise Driscoll, a part-time secretary in the Centre for Language Study, will move to full-time and will become the official Secretary of the Scheme. Details of how to contact Denise appear at the end.

The future with ALL involvement

Up to now the Scheme has catered almost exclusively for the pupils of Yorkshire schools. In some years as many as 800 pupils have gone to France and there is no need to spell out the benefits most participants derived. Gradually numbers have declined for various reasons, largely connected with the economic depression, but even this year well over 200 pupils took part in one or other of the two Schemes. On the French and German sides there remains a huge demand for British partners and the French Committee has recently reported that they had over 150 disappointed applicants when their list closed.

Here we believe that the switch to ALL could prove to be a very positive move as we shall be offering participation in the Scheme to any school near enough to the route South to join the parties when they travel. Schools within easy reach of the A1 Services can be accommodated and we hope to see many new faces on the Exchange.

As time goes by we shall seek to develop new forms of the Exchange bringing in different age groups and offering different modes of travel and different travel arrangements. Suggestions can be made through the Users' Committee which will be open to all participants in the Scheme.

Details about the Schemes

Please write in the first instance to Mrs Denise Driscoll, Exchange Secretary, c/o Centre for Language Study, Leeds Metropolitan University (L.M.U.), Room JG108 Beckett Park, LEEDS LS6 3QS.

Alternatively you may telephone for details on Telephone No. 0113 283 2600 ext. 3606 or FAX 0113 283 3189. Full information will then be sent to you by post. Please ask to be put on the mailing list to receive future information about the Schemes.

Both the French and the German Schemes involve 15 days stay on each side.

Dates and Cost

The French Scheme operates differently from the German Scheme.

The French will arrive in Yorkshire on Sunday, 20 July 1997 and depart with their British partners on Saturday, 2 August. British pupils will then come home on Sunday, 17 August. On the German Exchange the British pupils go out to Germany at Easter, departing 22 March 1997 and returning 6 April and the German party will arrive in Yorkshire on Thursday, 24 July and depart on Thursday, 7 August.

The cost will be approximately £130 for the French Exchange and £150 for the German Exchange.

We look forward to great support for the scheme from members of ALL and their students. Please do all you can to publicise these exchanges and underline the immense value to the individuals who participate.

For further information on the French or German exchanges please write or telephone to:

Mrs Denise Driscoll
Yorks-Lille-Westphalia Committee
James Graham Building
Room 108
Beckett Park
Leeds Metropolitan University
LEEDS LS6 3QS
Tel: 0113 283 2600 ext. 3606
Fax: 0113 283 3189

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Organising a French Exchange

Claire Jones

An exchange visit abroad enables pupils to gain an insight into a foreign culture which would be impossible to convey in the classroom alone. It will increase pupils' motivation and enthusiasm and encourage tolerance and understanding of other cultures and societies. Not least is the obvious advantage of offering an unrivalled opportunity for language learning. Such benefits are acknowledged in Modern Foreign Languages in the National Curriculum, and now more pupils than ever are taking part in visits and exchanges abroad.

By its very nature, however, an exchange visit must involve an element of the unknown. Unlike a school holiday, for example, teachers cannot provide supervision 24 hours a day. I have organised exchanges for several years and I have evolved a number of strategies designed to ensure as far as possible the safety and well-being of all participants.

Preparation

The wording of the personal details form, used for matching partners, is vital. For example, it is surprising how easily a stay abroad could be spoilt for a child, simply by being given a partner whose family smoke. I use the following form:

French Exchange to .... 199..........................

Please fill in with BLOCK CAPITALS.

Name .... Tutor Group ....

Sex .... Date of Birth ....

Height ....

Address and Postcode ....

Telephone Number and code ....

Names and ages of brothers and sisters living at home:

Brothers ....

Sisters ....

Occupation of Parents/Guardians (Please fill in both unless you only have one parent at home):

Mother ....

Father ....

Favourite subjects at school ....

Interests ....

Will your French partner share your bedroom? ....

Do you have any pets? ....

Do you dislike, or are you allergic to, any animals? ....

Are you allergic to cigarette smoke? ....

Is there anything else your host-family should know e.g. are you vegetarian? ....

Special requests ....

Signed .... Date ....
(Parent/Guardian)

It will greatly increase pupils' confidence if they are given preparation to enable them to deal with situations which may arise. Information about French table manners, what to expect for breakfast, or how to deal with unfamiliar food would prepare pupils for some of the culture shock they will experience. Knowing how to be polite when introduced to 'Grand-mère', or how to ask for something needed urgently, or what to say when feeling ill or tired are invaluable skills. Finally the importance of all aspects of road safety in France cannot be over-emphasised. It may be necessary to shock pupils if the point is to be well and truly made.

The Exchange Diary

This contains essential information for use both before and during the visit, and it provides a lasting record of the trip. A checklist at the beginning includes advice about what to pack, pocket money, customs regulations, how to telephone home, road safety, and addresses and telephone numbers of all accompanying staff. Detailed arrangements for each day follow, beginning with the day of departure. These are interspersed with maps, questionnaires, useful phrases and short projects, some to be completed with the help of the French partner. There are also pictures and information about the region, to which pupils add their own photographs, postcards and small souvenirs. Pupils write about their experiences, in French or English, ask questions of their host families and observe differences between French and English life.

The parents' meeting

A meeting for parents and pupils is held shortly before departure. The Exchange Diary is given out and the leader goes through the programme for each day in detail. The checklist can be expanded upon. Everybody should be made aware, for example, that too many telephone calls cause homesickness. Both parents and pupils must be told at this meeting of the ground rules. These might include the following:

You must not smoke during the exchange.

You must not buy or drink alcohol, unless you are offered wine at a family meal.

You are not allowed to go to late night discos or clubs.

You must fit in with your family's way of life.

Parents can ask questions and be introduced to other members of staff taking part. Slides or a video can be shown.

Information for the French family

If there are any activities such as horse-riding, swimming cycling which parents do not wish their child to undertake whilst in France, French families should be informed in writing. They should also be told of allergies or other medical conditions, or special diets required. (NOT 'No frogs' legs or horsemeat' please!) It is wise to inform families that pupils are forbidden to ride motorcycles (for insurance reasons) or mopeds. All this information, and the rules for behaviour, can be sent in translation to each family through the teacher in charge in France.

The following letter is given to all host families:

Madame, Monsieur,

En tant que responsable des élèves britanniques qui font l'échange avec le Collège . . . , permettez-moi de vous informer du règlement déjà communiqué par la direction de . . . School aux participants et à leurs parents concernant le comportement des élèves pendant leur séjour en France.

D'abord il est formellement défendu aux élèves de fumer. L'alcool aussi leur est interdit, à moins que ce ne soit en famille, pour accompagner un repas spécial. Les élèves n'ont pas le droit d'assister aux discothèques ou aux boîtes à une heure avancée de la nuit, et ils ne doivent jamais sortir le soir avec d'autres élèves anglais, non accompagnés de leurs partenaires français. Ils doivent surtout respecter à tous moments votre routine familiale.

Finalement les jeunes Anglais ne sont pas capables de tenir de longues conversations, et entourés d'une famille étrangère, ils risquent de se sentir timides au début. Cependant ils se débrouillent assez bien en phrases courtes et je vous serais très reconnaissant de bien vouloir les encourager à communiquer.

N'hésitez pas de me téléphoner tout de suite s'il y a un problème, quoi que ce soit.

Veuillez agréer, Madame, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.

This page is sent to families individually:

Nom ....

Prénom ....

Correspondant de ....

Suivant le règlement du Conseil d'Administration du Collège .... concernant les échanges, les parents ont le droit de signaler les activités défendues à leurs enfants quand ils sont à l'étranger. Les demandes doivent être communiquées aux familles d'accueil par écrit.

Selon la demande des parents de ...., il lui est défendu de .... Pour des raisons d'assurance, il est formellement interdit aux élèves de faire de la motocyclette. Il leur est aussi défendu de faire de la mobylette ou vélomoteur.

Allergies/régime ....

(Teacher in charge) peut être contacté au ....

During the exchange

Before you arrive at your partner school, ask for a classroom to be reserved for the use of your group at the beginning of each day. Pupils will welcome the opportunity to see their friends, to talk about their experiences, to ask questions or discuss problems. It is an excellent opportunity for teachers to make sure that all is running smoothly and to keep a special eye on any ill or homesick pupils.

Finally there is one vital piece of equipment that no pupil should be without. It might be called 'the *Idiot* Card' or 'the FAIL SAFE card' and it contains the following information:

Collège .... (in France)

J'appartiens à un groupe anglais

Nom de Famille...

Prénom ....

Adresse en France ....

....

....

Numéro de téléphone ....

Responsable du groupe ....
(and address and telephone number)

Fill in this card and carry it with you *always*.

On the reverse there is a reminder in French and English about the motorcycle and moped rule. Carrying this card can be reassuring to the pupil, and it might avoid the situation which arose a few years ago in England when two lost Russian boys on an exchange were taken to a police station 50 miles away from where they should have been by a well meaning motorist. They spoke little English and had no means of identifying themselves.

Fortunately the experience of an exchange is usually very successful. Pupils frequently go on to make their own arrangements to visit each other independently. Sometimes whole families become involved, spending holidays with each other. I know of many long lasting friendships made between exchange partners, and of many pupils who have been set on the road to linguistic excellence through taking part in an exchange.

La valeur des échanges scolaires

Roger Delbouve, Bavay (Nord)

Les échanges Lille-Yorkshire m'ont beaucoup apporté et chaque fois que j'en ai l'occasion, je n'hésite pas à exprimer ma reconnaissance. Pendant plus de vingt ans j'ai été le correspondant des échanges dans mon établissement à Bavay (Nord), à moitié distance entre Valenciennes et Mons en Belgique. Nos lycées et collèges étaient alors appariés à des établissements du Yorkshire, et j'entretenais les meilleurs rapports avec mes collègues britanniques. Nous étions des amis, et je participais régulièrement aux voyages des professeurs de Lille dans le Yorkshire. Cela facilitait bien les choses; nous avions rarement recours à l'office de Lille pour trouver des partenaires pour les candidats aux échanges. Les appariements se faisaient pratiquement toujours entre les élèves de nos établissements respectifs.

Les résultats ont toujours été très bons: des familles françaises de la région sont encore en relation avec des familles britanniques. Tous les ans nous allons chez nos anciens partenaires; à leur tour, les Anglais sont chaleureusement accueillis. Grâce aux Echanges Lille-Yorkshire j'ai pu profiter d'un accord entre les gouvernements britannique et français et j'ai pu enseigner dans un lycée du Yorkshire pendant une demi année scolaire et mon collègue anglais me remplaçait à Bavay. Je conserve le meilleur souvenir de mon séjour dans le Yorkshire. Accompagné de ma famille nous avons tous pu connaître et apprécier toutes les beautés de cette pittoresque région du Yorkshire. Ce séjour m'a beaucoup appris.

On compare souvent les organismes privés qui envoient des jeunes gens en Angleterre et les échanges Lille-Yorkshire. Envoyée dans le sud d'Angleterre par un organisme privé une de mes élèves a eu peu de contact avec des Anglais car on se retrouvait entre Français après les cours; on rencontrait rarement les gens chez qui on logeait.

Encore aujourd'hui je m'efforce de faire comprendre à des parents que rien ne remplace le séjour dans une famille qu'offrent les échanges Lille-Yorkshire. Evidemment recevoir le correspondant peut être une contrainte surtout pour la mère de famille, mais cela est largement compensé par le profit que l'enfant retire de son séjour. Pour moi les échanges Lille-Yorkshire sont irremplaçables et méritent bien que tous les efforts soient faits par les autorités éducatives, les professeurs, les parents pour permettre aux échanges de se développer encore.

Le Prochain colloque annuel de 'l'Association for French Language Studies aura lieu **à l'Université de Montpellier du 12 au 14 septembre 1997. Le sujet du colloque sera le suivant:**

LES DESCRIPTIONS DU FRANCAIS:
discours, corpus, analyses, applications

Les chercheurs-enseignants dans l'enseignement supérieur qui souhaitent proposer une communication sont priés d'en envoyer un résumé à Dr Anne Judge, Department of Linguistic and International Studies, University of Surrey, GUILDFORD, GU2 5XH, UK; tél: 01483 300 800; fax: 01483 302 605; courrier électronique: j.blows@surrey.ac.uk, avant le 31 janvier 1997

Developing the International Dimension for Pupils with Special Needs

Hazel Thompson

Materials prepared for Brookside Special School, Derby

This report is presented as the plan for an itinerary which aims to motivate pupils from a special school which caters for the needs of children who are emotionally, behaviourally disturbed. It provides the opportunity to introduce them to certain activities and subject matter which could be used as a basis for teaching material. This is an initial investigation made by a teacher with experience of working with these children, and a knowledge of the sort of thing that would prove to be motivating for them or otherwise.

The area to be visited, for which an itinerary was planned, was Calais, Boulogne and some of the places in between. The pupils' response to the learning situations could be monitored further at the time of the school trip, and acceptable subject-matter developed and differentiated later at school to suit each pupil's individual needs and level of skill.

The aim would be to consolidate and develop their language ability, provide opportunities for contact with native speakers and authentic materials, and to provide an opportunity to identify with the experiences of the people in this area. It also takes into account some cross-curricula input.

The itinerary is planned initially for a day-trip. It would probably be better to plan the trip for late April/May because the coastline along the two Caps can be very bleak. The decision to plan for a day-trip rather than a longer stay was made for the following reasons:

- Finance – these pupils are from backgrounds which cannot offer financial support for such activities.
- The school has not taken pupils to the continent before, and contacts abroad take time to establish, especially ones which would be appropriate for this type of pupil.
- Because of the behaviour problems associated with EBD pupils a short trip might provide opportunities to gauge how this could best be managed.

EBD pupils can be very receptive to a learning situation provided they are presented with differentiated and imaginative stimuli. Their low reading ability and short concentration span has also to be considered. Because of their emotional instability they require encouragement in the form of short projects with a certain amount of success guaranteed. Also because of this emotional fluctuation they need opportunities for self-expression.

Museums and Art galleries are not tolerated very well unless they can offer such things as audio-visual stimuli, and computerised displays which offer a degree of participation. Generally the amount of material presented at such places proves to be daunting for pupils with a low level of literacy, and their response is too superficial to be of educational value. These pupils achieve greater success when presented with learning material in small units, preferably in real situations that require active involvement. Trips and visits to places of interest are ideal learning environments because they often involve meeting other people and learning to exercise proper social skills which EBD pupils often lack.

The following itinerary provides suggestions for learning situations to be found on the journey between Dover and Boulogne and back. There are too many to be covered in one day, but this provides for an element of choice.

Cross-curricular classwork before the journey

The following provides a few suggestions which are by no means comprehensive, but do serve as an introduction to the sort of situations they will come across on the visit.

Pupils could do some research into the various ferry and hovercraft routes, and names of English and French ports. They might be able to do some work in Humanities concerning the economy of the region, and the nature of the imports and exports.

They could perhaps compare the various ways of crossing the channel, as far as time, cost, convenience and comfort are concerned. The Channel Tunnel provides a mass of interesting learning material for preparatory study, as well as worksheets which can be obtained from the exhibition centre at Folkestone. They could look at a map of France and find out the difference between A, E, N, and D roads. They could be shown on a map how France is divided into départements each with its own two numbers, the last two numbers of a car's registration are those of a particular département.

Many of the places they visit will abound with evidence from the two world wars; having learnt what life was like for a young person in wartime Britain, the perspective of that of a French person might more clearly be seen. History lessons could also possibly offer a chance to find out about the attempts made to cross the channel in the past, by aviation, (aeroplane and balloon.)

In Maths they might be shown how to change pounds sterling into French francs, kilometres into miles.

In French lessons, having learnt about French food, it would be useful to explore café and shop scenarios through role-play. Perhaps the pupils could each be given an authentic speaking assignment to do while they are away, in a situation of their choice.

Signs

AT3 & 4

Pupils will be bombarded with signs throughout the visit, it therefore makes sense to use their visual appeal and teaching potential to the full.

On the journey

On the approach to Dover pupils could start to look out for French number plates on vehicles, having been given a hand-out map of the *départements*, decide where they are from.

Pupils could look out for French lorries, and work out what they are carrying. They could be supplied with a sheet of blank lorry-shaped boxes to fill in with the name of the French produce and a space for the English underneath. They could possibly find out the English at a later date.

On the way to the ferry and on the ferry, there could be a competition to see who could write down the most signs. Perhaps underlining those words that are the same as English words. Finding words that are used in both the languages, and learning how they are pronounced in French can be an activity to take home. Pupils could also make some French signs when they get home to put up in the classroom, or round the school. Perhaps with an element of humour. Copying signs could be popular on the ferry as it would give the children something constructive to do as they look around.

Once they have arrived in France they could be asked how the French road signs differ from the English, and why some are crossed out. Look out for the various types of road, and perhaps fill in a blank road-map with place names as they travel.

Calais

PoS Part 1 Cultural Awareness

The first obvious place to visit is the Channel Tunnel exhibition centre at Coquelles, but there is always the possibility of visiting the one at Folkestone before crossing. One can get into the Coquelles centre free, and visit the cafetiera which offers a panoramic view over the terminal. This gives the pupils an idea of the scale of the project. Nearby is a large relief map showing a plan of the site. In the cafeteria there are also several touch-screen information displays in French and English. The pupils would find these a useful language resource, enabling them to ask questions about the shuttle.

The rest of the exhibition in the centre takes 20 minutes, and requires an admission fee. First of all there is a film presentation of the project. It would not be easy for pupils with reading problems to be able to keep up, because the film is in French with English subtitles. Perhaps for this reason any detailed study of the the subject might involve a visit to the Folkestone site. After the film one is shown a diaporama of the project. This is an exciting and colourful presentation of the project, showing the route of the tunnel by the use of lasers, together with projected and increasingly magnified land contours of France and Britain.

Cap Blanc Nez

The Channel Tunnel project is a convenient way of introducing the numerous attempts that have been made to cross the Channel in the past, and the variety of ways they have sought to do this, not always successfully. For Cap Blanc Nez take the D940 coast road to Boulogne.

Before turning off the road for the Cap one can find the monument to Latham, the aviator, who attempted unsuccessfully to fly across the Channel the same time as Blériot. This is rather a nice little lesson for EBD children seeing a monument to someone who had tried hard and failed but who nevertheless gained recognition.

Facing Cap Blanc Nez is the National Museum of Channel Crossing which retraces the various attempts to cross the channel in the past and present.

Cap Blanc Nez itself offers extensive views of the French coast, and the English cliffs. Remains of German gun emplacements and bunkers are numerous, and it is an interesting place for the children to explore.

The shaft of an unsuccessful tunnelling project can be seen on the cliff top not far from the Latham monument a little way back on the road to Calais. Directions on how to find this are on the illustrated sign on the cliff top at Cap Blanc Nez.

Boulogne

A visit must be made to the picturesque old town; the gardens provide a place to take a packed lunch. There are toilets to be found in the chateau courtyard. The ramparts offer an enjoyable place to explore. After lunch a visit could be made to Nausicaa, the world's largest sea-centre. This is well worth a visit. It presents the worlds of warm- and cold-water fish in spectacular settings. Written and spoken English is presented alongside the French, and there is ample opportunity for pupils to extend their vocabulary in this context.

This situation also broadens and consolidates familiar vocabulary, and it offers a colourful topic for work back in school. A visit to this centre would be particularly suitable for EBD children because of the lively presentation. There is also a touch-tank which offers an opportunity to stroke some of the fish; these children respond particularly to an activity of this sort because it gives them some emotional gratification which they seem to have a real need for. The shark tank would also prove to be very popular.

Stopping places on the way back to Calais, along the D940 coast road.

Wimereux

PoS Part 1 AT1 & 2

A very nice sea-side town full of typically French buildings. Here children might be encouraged to act out their role-play situations, previously practised in the classroom to buy ice-cream, chips, etc., from the brasseries and kiosks along the front.

Cap Gris Nez

PoS Part 1

Museum of the Second World War. Two miles after Audresselles, turn left onto the D191.

Uniforms and equipment are displayed here. Some of the guns and military vehicles are displayed outside and can be seen from the road if money is short by this time. Cap Gris Nez itself is covered with gun emplacements and bunkers from World War II. There is also a light-house along the cliff path and a refreshments cabin. Pupils might be able to imagine what life might have been like for French people during the Second World War, when they see the remains of the Atlantic wall, evidence of the German occupation.

Calais – Cité Europe

PoS Part 1 AT1 & 2

Near the Eurotunnel terminal is a vast shopping/entertainment centre with lots of visual stimuli, and familiar words and places from their language lessons – Crédit Lyonnais, boulangeries, brasseries, cinéma, etc. As well as shops it has a large food area with bars, cafés and brasseries dressed up to look like French, English and Italian streets. This would also seem a good place to encourage authentic language communication.

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For further information about the courses and assistance with travel costs for Open Day visits, contact:

Rachel Winn, Faculty of Languages and European Studies, UWE Bristol, Frenchay Campus, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QY. Tel: 0117 976 3914.

Promoting educational opportunity and the application of knowledge

Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in the French Classroom

Ann Cambier Derbyshire LEA

What follows are notes from an Inservice Training Session led by Ann Cambier, Adviser in Derbyshire, with teachers from Mortimer Wilson School, Alfreton; Tibshelf School, NE Derbyshire; Parkside Community School, Chesterfield; Brookfield Community School, Chesterfield; Frederick Gent School, South Normanton.

Supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs is a specialised skill in any subject in the curriculum. Supporting a pupil in a classroom where you are not familiar with the language medium can be a cause for concern on the part of the supporting teacher and a cause for scepticism on the part of the classroom teacher as to the usefulness of supporting pupils in the French classroom when you cannot understand French.

The two Inservice Training sessions that brought about this document were based on a will on the part of language teachers and special needs staff in several Derbyshire schools to raise the quality of support for foreign languages and to establish ground rules of good practice on the part of the language teacher and the support teacher.

Core vocabulary

The four SEN teachers all felt there was a great need for a core of vocabulary to be identified so that support staff without any formal language training could prepare for, and help children to obtain a basic core of vocabulary. An example of the type of work being done was given by the staff of Mortimer Wilson School, Alfreton, where the Scheme of Work included a part dedicated to differentiated expectations and as a support for the Special Needs staff.

An example of the areas included on the Scheme of Work:

1. A core vocabulary of 10 words, 5 of which basic minimum
2. Extension One – basic phrases in topic in foreign language and English if necessary
3. Extension Two – other vocabulary areas or phrases for more able pupils
4. Other resources useful for the less or more able could be included.

(See example included at the end.)

Planning and liaison time

Planning and liaison time were considered to be crucial if a school were to offer a suitable curriculum to pupils with special educational needs. Within that several factors were identified:

- role of the support teacher
- differentiation
- status of support teacher

In the classroom, support teachers identified that not knowing what was going on made the support teacher lose status. It also wasted a great deal of time and prevented any preparation on the part of the support teacher going on in advance.

Worksheets given in advance to the support teacher would allow them to check for readability in terms of layout and print size, especially where they are handwritten and allow them to adapt and make new worksheets.

The process of passing information is sometimes difficult and time consuming, but it was agreed by modern foreign language teachers and special needs support teachers that within each topic forward planning could go on and be shared so that the basic vocabulary and phrases with intended activities could be ready, several weeks in advance. This was decided so that support teachers would then be able to start work on developing games and hands-on experience tasks for children with learning difficulties, short concentration spans etc.

The Scheme of Work, as outlined previously, would allow that to happen well in advance.

Whole school issues

Discussion on withdrawal from lessons raised concerns. Problems are caused by withdrawal from lessons. Where pupils regularly miss one or several lessons a week their language experience was further disadvantaged.

Another whole school issue is the individual teaching styles of certain teachers. For example, where the whole lesson is teacher-led this does not allow opportunities for support staff to give help to children. The relationship between the support staff and the modern foreign language staff does not develop in these classes and the status of support staff is also diminished. Pupils with special educational needs, as any child, have a short concentration span and benefit from not only a change of activity, but also some movement within the classroom, a change of grouping, a survey, checking information on the walls etc. it is important that within each lesson the support teacher has an opportunity to work with groups of children needing their help. It was also ascertained that where MFL staff gave support staff opportunities to work with more able pupils this raised the status of the support staff and gave them opportunities to further their knowledge in the foreign language.

It was stressed again that the relationship between support staff and the teacher was really crucial. One school has decided that unless subject teachers plan their lesson to use the expertise of the support staff, eventually that support will be removed and used with a teacher who makes more effective use.

Schools should think very carefully about the way they match teachers and manage them. The timetabling is of great importance and should not leave just a fitting-in exercise. Some schools target departments and staff to departments so that expertise is used most effectively and although some departments have no support for a period of time, when they do, that support can include more intensive planning and development work which will ultimately enhance the learning experience of pupils.

The learning experience and work group

Discussion on the length of activities revealed that even if a class teacher changes activities at regular intervals, but children remain together as a whole class and do not have opportunity to physically move or to reinforce their work, then pupils with SEN may still lose concentration and not follow the lesson.

A maximum of 10 minutes for an activity is preferable. After an initial presentation of 10 minutes it would be better for pupils with SEN to be offered a different type of task. The importance of group work was stressed at this stage by support staff and MFL teachers. Some teachers have developed some good practice in this area and it became clear that the grouping of children was particularly important. There is no one best way to group children. The important factor is that children are grouped according to the type of task they are carrying out and that they are given opportunities to work within different types of groupings. These might include:

- Friendship groupings
- Spread of abilities
- Boy-girl, boy-girl (sometimes for control)
- Ability groupings.

Groupwork is important because it is not seen as threatening as the whole class situation to children with SEN or quiet children. It is important, however, to introduce groupwork as early down the school as possible. The comment was also made that in schools where little groupwork was developed, this made the work of the teacher trying to promote groupwork much harder. Schools should promote groupwork in the subject at an earlier stage and across subjects.

Resource-based learning is also important for good practice. The classroom environment affects the way children learn and a variety of grouping of tables can change the behaviour within a classroom. For example, sitting children in rows, a horseshoe, periphery seating, creates a different learning environment and affects paired work, groupwork etc. Moving furniture is a time consuming procedure when undertaken by the teacher, but as the Head of Department at Tibshelf School, near Chesterfield pointed out, pupils can be managed to move furniture themselves.

Conclusion

The availability of support in schools is threatened by budget cuts. Teachers say that there never seems to be enough support in school. However, the way support is used in classes will be a deciding factor as to whether senior management teams leave the support jobs as a high priority area. Where support is well managed and well directed, pupils with special educational needs achieve more. With good planning and monitoring a support team can prove this to be true.

Modern Languages: French (Mortimer Wilson School)
Scheme of Work: Year 8
Module 1: Jour J

1. Describing photos (revision of family)

Core	*Extension 1*	*Extension 2*
mon père	mon oncle	faire...
ma mère	ma tante	du canoë
mes parents	mes copines	du vélo
ma soeur (mes...)	mes cousins	du camping
mon frère (mes...)	sur la plage	une promenade
mon copain (mes...)	dans le jardin	une randonnée
à la campagne	à la maison	froid
en ville	au café	chaud
au bord de la mer	un barbecue	beau
à la montagne		mauvais
Structures		
Je suis avec	je + e/s	faire
C'est (moi)	il/elle + e/t/d	il faisait + weather
	on + e/t/d	nous + ons
		ils/elles + ent

2. Talking about holidays: activities

j'ai fait du cheval
j'ai fait des promenades
j'ai fait du kayak
j'ai fait de la planche à voile
j'ai fait du skateboard
je suis resté(e) à la maison
je suis allé(e) au parc d'attractions
j'ai travaillé à la ferme
j'ai nagé
j'ai lu des B.D.
j'ai regardé la télé
j'ai joué au tennis

Structures

awareness of difference between past/present	j'ai + past participle je suis + p.p. tu form questions	elle/il a + p.p. il/elle est + p.p. agreement of p.p. + être

- **timetable wisely**
- **pair teacher and support teacher well**
- **high teacher expectations**
- **length of activities**
- **groupwork**
- **classroom arrangement**
- **clear planning**

FIPF in Tokyo

Ian Bauckham (Chair of French Committee)
John Trafford (Representative in CEO)

Two questions for you: What is the **FIPF**? and What has it got to do with Tokyo, Japan?

The answer to the first question is that FIPF stands for *Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français*, a world wide confederation of all national associations which exist across the globe for teachers of French. (The) ALL, as the British body which represents you, the French teacher, is a member of FIPF. Membership had been suspended for a short period up to early 1996 due to British unease about the purposefulness of some aspects of the *Fédération's* life. However, at its February meeting, *your* French committee, after reviewing assurances received from Annie Monnerie-Goarin, FIPF secretary general, took the decision to renew membership forthwith.

This was in ample time to send two representatives to the four-yearly (like the Olympics!) *congrès* to be held in Tokyo in the last week of August 1996. And that answers the second question. The two representatives from ALL were Ian Bauckham, chair of your French Committee, and John Trafford, ex-chair of Policy Committee, whom the French Committee invited to be the permanent representative on the CEO (FIPF is divided into regional commissions – CEO stands for *Commission de l'Europe de l'Ouest*.

After orientating themselves in the Japanese capital and coming to terms with the impossibility of reading or understanding anything at all in Japanese, the British delegates made their way to Keio University for the opening sessions of the congress on 25 August. There was an amazing buzz on the Keio campus with delegates from all parts of the globe, from Canada to Cambodia, Mexico to Malaysia and Zaire to New Zealand. An enormously valuable part of the Congress was the informal interaction which took place in the canteen and on the campus of the university between these delegates from across the world.

It is interesting that when we, the British delegates, introduced ourselves to colleagues from other countries, a common reaction was along the lines: 'How lucky you are to be a language teacher in Britain. You are amongst the few countries in the world who can plan a proper and reasonable language learning policy! The rest of us have to bow to the supremacy of English – all other languages are sidelined.' It is salutary to have our problems relativised sometimes!

During the *cérémonie d'ouverture* there were messages of goodwill from, amongst others, Jacques Chirac, *Président de la République*, and the Japanese Prime Minister. This was followed by a superb reception *offerte* by Keio University.

Monday contained several sessions of note. First was a *table ronde* chaired by Annie Monnerie-Goarin, during the course of which she asked participants from various countries to identify the reasons for learning French in their countries. this is how the participants answered:

TUNISIE	*renforcer le processus démocratique et la tolérance.*
ESPAGNE	*nous sommes un voisin de la France, nous avons des liens historiques, nous avons même un roi d'origine française. En plus, le français est une langue qui incite à la reflexion.*
CHINE	*cela fait partie de la politique d'ouverture. Beaucoup d'organisations étrangères commencent à s'implanter en Chine.*

PONT-
HUMBERT
FRANCE
MAILLET
BEN JELLOUN
MAKINE
SIMON
FRANCE

Table Ronde des écrivains francophones.

ROUMANIE *Nous aimons le français, nous avons un patrimoine partagé, et la langue française en Roumanie n'est pas perçue comme une langue étrangère mais comme une langue partenaire.*

In the afternoon there were regional forums – the British delegates, of course, attended the Forum de l'Europe. Delegates from across Europe met to exchange ideas and experiences of French teaching, relating both to national education systems and to voluntary language associations.

Two notable features emerged, firstly, that in most (non-English speaking) countries there was a general acceptance that English was irreversibly established as the most popular and necessary foreign language for school pupils, and that French was in many cases vying for second place. Secondly, the commitment and energy of conference delegates and their colleagues was leading to the establishment of a growing number of French teaching associations, especially in countries where social and political conditions were in many ways adverse, for example, Croatia and the former republics of the USSR.

The renewal of ALL's membership of FIPF after a period of secession was warmly greeted by delegates.

The evening of Monday saw a most generous reception of all 1,000 delegates at the French Embassy in Tokyo, followed by a soirée of traditional Japanese music and dance.

The highlight of Tuesday was a *table ronde* of notable Francophone authors, including Tahar Ben Jelloun (Morocco), Raphaël Confiant (Martinique), Henri Lopes (Congo) and Yves Simon (France). Raphaël Confiant made an interesting distinction when he spoke of people who are Francophone by force (peoples of cultures colonised by the French) or by choice (individuals who have made a pragmatic decision to use the French language). He insisted that people like himself, member of a culture forced to use French by historical circumstance, must liberate themselves by first exploring their own language or dialect, in this case Creole. It is for this reason that Confiant's early work is in Creole. He only chose to use French later in order to access a wider public.

Wednesday was devoted to excursions to surrounding tourists sites: the British delegates visited Kamakura, home of a famous and enormous statue of Buddha, and were privileged to be invited to a Japanese tea ceremony – normally impossible for tourists, but arranged because the master of the ceremony was a former French student of a member of the Japanese organising committee. It just goes to show that you never know what doors will be opened by French teaching or learning!

Thursday's theme was *Travailler/étudier en français* and contained a number of interesting sessions on French for vocational purposes. Friday was dedicated to the new technologies. TV5 gave a useful presentation of their services directed at the teaching and learning of French. They have prepared an interesting pack for teachers: *Apprendre et enseigner avec TV5* which is available from

Dominque Martineau
TV5
19 rue Cognacq-jay
75341 Paris cédex 07
FAX 0033 1 44 18 48 38
e-mail tv5@calvacom.fr
Internet site http://www.tv5.org

Detailed teaching packs for use with TV5 programmes have been prepared in Canada by Arlette Niedoba. They can be obtained from her at

Consortium de Télévision Québec
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1755 Boul. René-Lévesque Est
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FAX (514) 522 6572
Internet site http://www.tv5.org

Ian Bauckham and John Trafford with the Chair of the Japanese Organising Committee Fumiteru Chikushi.

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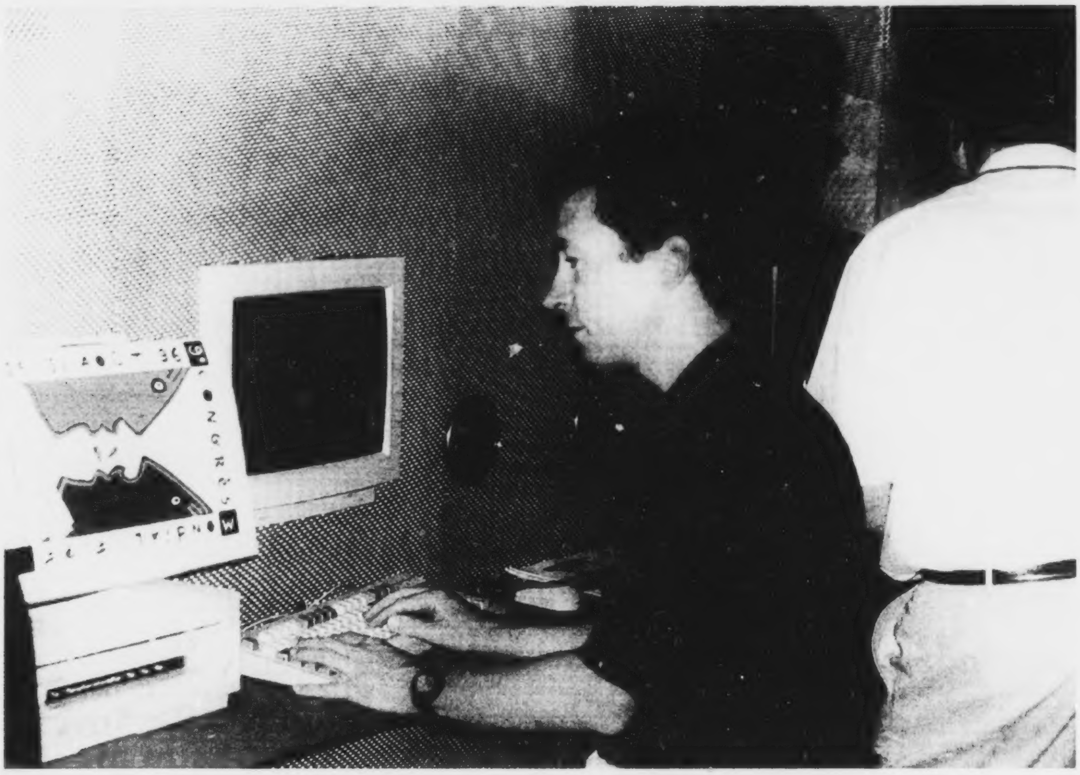

Ian Bauckham surfing the French Internet.

Friday finished with one of the most important tasks of the assembled delegates, namely, the election of a new president and two vice presidents of FIPF to serve for four years until the next World Congress. Britain, with five votes for each office, was amongst the most powerful elector countries, and we were delighted to be able to congratulate Alain Braun of Belgium as the new president and Joop van Schaik (Netherlands) and Monique Lebrun (Quebec) as the new vice presidents. Here is an extract from Monsieur Braun's electoral address:

> *Il est clair à mes yeux que notre Fédération est probablement le meilleur outil de la Francophonie parcequ'elle regroupe un nombre important de personnes qui quotiennement et parfois dans des conditions difficiles œuvrent à une meilleure maîtrise la langue. Il faut dès lors continuer à construire une image de qualité de la FIPF, en insistant sur le professionalisme de ses adhérents et en augmentant encore celui-ci par la mise en place d'une formation continue répondant aux besoins et aux aspirations des enseignants de français. . . . D'autre part, à l'aube du XXIe siècle, il est important d'exister en portant des actes visibles. Je compte à ce titre développer l'efficacité de la circulation de l'information ainsi que le soutien aux projets des associations et des commissions. Pour être crédibles, faisons ce que nous savons le mieux faire et développons des projets . . . qui soient proches des besoins des enseignants, les seuls probablement à détenir en eux des solutions réalistes.*

The intention of this article has been to remind members of the existence of the FIPF and to offer an outline report of the Congrès Mondial. It is being written at 10,000 metres somewhere over Siberia on the return journey from Tokyo in order to meet the deadline for this issue of *Francophonie*. The next edition will contain further feedback. Watch this space. Any member who has questions relating to the FIPF or the Congrès Mondial is welcome to contact John or Ian.

Tôkyô, et après . . .

Annie Monnerie-Goarin Secrétaire
générale de la FIPF

Le projet était ambitieux, mais le pari a bien été tenu: l'association japonaise des professeurs de français, la FIPF dans son ensemble, ont, avec l'appui des partenaires publics et privés, réalisé un congrés exceptionnel. Pour la première fois en Asie, un Congrès a rassemblé plus de 1000 professeurs venus de 110 pays différents. Les résultats ont été à la hauteur des ambitions affichées il y a trois ans. Quatre grandes orientations avaient été retenues, constituant chacune la thématique principale d'une journée: les politiques pour le français; les cultures en français; travailler, étudier en français; innovations pédagogiques.

Chacune de ces journées commençait par des séances plénières au cours desquelles des spécialistes de la question, venus du monde de l'enseignement ou d'autres horizons, exposaient leur point de vue et répondaient aux interrogations de la salle.

Les après-midi étaient, eux, consacrées à des ateliers ou des tables rondes d'ordre plus pédagogiques.

Les 330 intervenants se sont attachés à débattre de l'avenir du français dans des contextes géopolitiques variés et souvent en mouvement: quelles sont aujourd'hui, quelles seront demain les raisons politiques, culturelles, économiques d'apprendre le français? Comment motiver les apprenants? Quelles images donner du français? Le résultat de ces débats devrait permettre à la FIPF de définir ses grandes lignes d'action pour les quatre années qui viennent et de mettre en chantier de nouveaux dossiers, ancrés dans la «société civile».

Le pôle multimédia, témoignage de la modernité du français, a été un élément incontestable de succès, surtout de par sa dimension informatique, que plus d'une centaine de visiteurs quotidiens ont tout particulièrement appréciée.

La table ronde des écrivains a été elle aussi un moment fort du Congrès. Celui-ci s'est terminé sur une superbe conférence de Michel Serres qui, en revendiquant la multiplicité de ses appartenances culturelles a haussé le débat, et fait taire les tentations identitaires par trop étriquées.

Seuls quelques mauvais esprits pourront lire ici l'expression d'une auto-satisfaction rituelle car la FIPF a donné à Tôkyô l'image de son importance, et la mesure de son réseau de «soutiers de la francophonie», selon les termes du Figaro, soutiers que nous préférons, nous, appeler piliers ou chantres.

Nous espérons que grâce à ce Congrès chaque professeur de français se sentira conforté et grandi, et prêt à entrer d'un pas allègre dans ce XXIe siècle, dont nous saluerons ensemble la naissance à Paris, dans quatre ans.

Tiré de *L'Univers du Français*,
septembre 1996

FUTURE ISSUES OF *FRANCOPHONIE*

In future issues of *Francophonie* it is intended to give special emphasis to a number of topics which will be of interest and relevance to readers. Amongst these topics will figure such issues as:

Primary French
Québec and its culture
School visits and exchanges to French speaking countries
Francophonie countries and their cultures
I.T. and French studies
F.E. and adult courses in French at all levels in the U.K.
Experience of French language holiday courses in French universities
Courses involving French in British universities
Alternatives to A level in French
The new GCSEs
Fostering students' creative writing in French – with examples
French dictionaries – their use and value
The use of French satellite TV and videos
Reading in French at different attainment levels
Teaching French Grammar
Teacher training – the student in the classroom
Post-to-post teacher exchanges
A selection of 'howlers' from recent scripts

All readers are urged to consider writing something on any of the above topics. Articles of 1000 to 3000 words which express aspirations or suggestions for a successful outcome will be welcomed by the Editor. Pupil/student contributions will be very welcome. If in doubt please discuss proposals with the Editor who will be very happy to explore any suggestion with you. In addition we shall continue to welcome articles on language, literature and institutions as in the past.

Alan Smalley
Editor

Primary French in Jersey and the Challenge from *Jèrriais*

Marie Landick

Royal Holloway
University of London

Part One: French in primary school in the British Isles

This article has been prompted by events which have occurred in two linguistically significant non-UK areas of the British Isles. It is offered for the insights it may provide in the current climate of renewed enthusiasm for foreign languages in the primary school. The aim is not to argue in favour of or against the teaching of French from an early age.

CILT (1995) speaks of a remarkable resurgence of enthusiasm for and renewed interest in early language learning. Support has come in the form of the Dearing suggestion that freed up time in Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum be used for foreign language teaching. This is indeed pleasing news in view of the negative views expressed in the Burstall report which, sadly, concluded (albeit tentatively, according to Nuffield, 1977):

> *it is hard to resist the conclusion that the weight of the evidence has combined with the balance of opinion to tip the scales against a possible expansion of the teaching of French in primary schools.* (Burstall, 1974, p. 246)

The question as to whether there was *any substantial gain in mastery to be achieved by beginning to learn French at the age of eight?* (ibid., p. 243) was answered *unequivocally in the negative.* (ibid., p. 243)

Although the pupils' *more positive attitude* was noted, this was supposedly *not reflected in a correspondingly higher level of achievement* (ibid., p. 244) except in listening comprehension, in which the slight superiority was dismissed as a *fairly minimal return for the extra years spent learning French in the primary school.* (ibid., p. 244)

While in some parts of the UK, primary French schemes have come and gone, in Jersey, primary French has been the norm since before the turn of the century. This has been the case for political as well as geographical and historical reasons and has the full support of the law.

According to CILT figures which CILT state should be treated with caution (CILT, 1995, p. 5), in the UK maintained sector (excluding Scotland where the scheme has captured the national imagination),

> *A very small percentage of children are currently learning a language . . . this can be estimated at between 5 and 7% nationally.* (ibid., p. 5)

Despite Jersey's proximity to France, French in the island is now a foreign language notwithstanding its official status in the courts where English is merely permissible but, in practice, tends to be the norm. The small community of French-born residents (1,108 out of a population of 82,809 in 1989 (States of Jersey, 1990)) was not large enough to prevent the closure of the French consulate in the nineties.

The law

According to the Jersey *Règlements (1946) sur l'enseignement de la langue française dans les écoles publiques élémentaires R&O 1598 r.5.-(I)*, issued under the *Loi (1912) sur l'Instruction Primaire*, it is only in exceptional cases that children will not study French at school. It states that:

> *Sauf exceptions (. . .) la langue française devra être enseignée à tous les élèves dans les écoles publiques élémentaires.*

Exceptions to the law include (R&O 1598 Amended reprint r.5-(2) (c)): *les enfants réputés par l'instituteur en chef incapables de profiter de l'étude de la langue française.*

This law affords special status to French. However, it does not highlight the fact that teaching has not been carried out systematically through the medium of French since before the turn of the century by which time English had become the medium of education in island schools.

Some schools today only start to teach French to eight- or nine-year-olds. Thus, some pupils leave primary school with as little as two school years of French behind them, even though the specified age is quite clear in the law: *le mot 'élèves' signifie des élèves âgés de sept ans au moins et d'onze ans révolus au plus.*

In Appendix A of the Jersey Key Stage 2 Programme of Study, the requirement that French be taught is seen as *an entitlement* on the part of the pupil rather than an obligation on the part of the school.

Key Stage 2 also states quite clearly that the primary school course *Salut Jersey* (1991) (devised locally by a team advised by Lol Briggs and Brian Goodman-Stephens, then of East Sussex) may provide less than the four-year required period of tuition for the learners:

> *The course is designed to be covered over a three year period at Key Stage 2, assuming four half-hour sessions per week. Some schools complete all four parts in less time.*

In 1995 all primary schools with pupils at stage 2 (24) were teaching *Salut Jersey*. In 20 the course was being taught over three years, in four over two years with more time being allocated.

The course: *Salut Jersey*

The course comes in four parts and has four attainment targets: listening, speaking, reading and responding, and writing.

The materials include: flash cards, worksheets, tapes, a teacher's manual, audio cassettes and four quite well produced and illustrated workbooks which are entirely in French, unlike their *Salut la France* (1989) equivalents. The materials lack the colour of the previously-used *En Avant* teaching aids.

Considering the course is tailor-made for Jersey, it is a great pity that more is not made of local heritage, family names, place names, street names, legal terms and traditions with which many of the pupils would be familiar.

The strengths of the system

The greatest advantage of the system is that of continuity Since French is compulsory for all but the exception, all pupils are deemed to have reached an all-island minimum standard by the time they transfer to secondary school and so most have the same starting point.

The course was devised specifically for use by the small local community. The panel devising it included advisers from East Sussex who had been responsible for their own course, *Salut la France*.

While in parts of the UK in-service training for early foreign language learning teachers is often problematic, a Jersey training scheme, outlined in the 1912 Jersey law, has been in operation for many years. It awards the b*revet de capacité* to successful candidates who may teach French in primary schools. Despite the geographical position of the island and early learning of French, there is, nevertheless, a shortage of such teachers. Links with the Université de Caen, which have been important in studies on the Jersey language (Jèrriais) and in providing teaching for compulsory six-month *stages* at Caen university for future Jersey lawyers, have been useful here as the university also helps with a three-week *stage* in the Caen area for trainee primary-French teachers. The island has approximately 60 teachers qualified to teach French at primary level. Unfortunately, these are not evenly spread throughout the schools. A full-time peripatetic teacher serves some seven schools, although it has generally been found preferable for class teachers to teach French to their own classes.

The report on an all-island inspection by UK advisers, carried out after the implementation of *Salut Jersey*, began:

> *Primary French in Jersey is of a high standard. Most teachers have adapted well to the introduction of communicative methodology and the new primary course has found favour with pupils, parents and teachers.*

The early start would appear to be beneficial to pupils. GCSE results are above average by UK standards and some pupils sit their GCSE one year early. In 1995, French was the third most popular subject to be taken at GCSE, after English and Maths. The number of pupils is given below:

GCSE 1995	English	753
	Maths.	717
	French	714
Year 11 pupils		778
Jersey	French % A*-C	64.3%
UK	French % A*-C	51.1%

Hasty conclusions should be avoided, as Jersey GCSE results are consistently above the UK average, though not always so markedly.

	English	753
Jersey	English % A*-C	69.4%
UK	English % A*-C	58.2%
	maths.	717
Jersey	maths. % A*-C	53.1%
UK	maths. % A*-C	46.2%

Unfortunately, any advantage gained at GCSE is not obvious in the A level results (recently below the national average). This is attributed to the high participation rates in A level courses and overall increases in subject entries since 1992.

Language as a social weapon in the nineteenth century (Kelleher, 1995)

Between 1821 and 1851, the population of Jersey more than doubled, rising from 28,600 to 57,155. This was mainly due to an influx of English immigrants. Nevertheless, at the time of the census in 1851, two of the three Sunday services in the St. Helier parish church were still in French, one in English. During the nineteenth century, those who deplored anglicisation looked to the teaching of French as a means of reinforcing local identity. The Privy Council withdrew education funding in 1871 to put pressure on the States of Jersey to comply with the 1870 Elementary Education Act. This would of course mean assessment of schools in English. In 1873, as a means of fighting back, the States of Jersey linked funding to the compulsory teaching of French. The language battle was probably decided on the negative attitude towards an influx of Breton workers. There was resentment towards them in the rural community. This was the first threat which had been felt outside town. In 1881, 30% of the permanent labour force was Breton. Although the French were debarred from purchasing real estate, between 1851 and 1901 the permanent French presence had increased from 2,100 to 5,836 (ibid., pp. 258–259.) Their alien nationality and religion were seen as a threat.

According to Kelleher,

> *The Breton challenge had to be curbed. The question occupied the States' attention far more than the threat of the English language.* (ibid., p. 256)

The *Comité de l'Immigration* required the assurance that the English language would be thoroughly applied in local education. Kelleher concludes:

> *It was curious how the English language could be utilised by both sides of the linguistic camp.* (ibid., p. 259)

The Jersey people were not fond of the English on their doorstep. They were even less fond of the French with their foreign ways and religion making incursions in the heart of the countryside.

In 1906 the *Comité de l'Immigration* stated:

> *Tant que l'immigration française trouvera ici des conditions de travail meilleures qu'en France, nous devons aussi nous occuper sérieusement de ses conséquences et de son influence sur l'avenir de notre île'. (Rapport de l'immigration d'étrangers en cette île (Jersey, 1906, p. 16))* (Kelleher, 1995, p. 231)

One could conclude that neither English nor French may fulfil the function of preserving Jersey's identity. One may wonder if the local *Oïl* dialect, Jèrriais, could have this function. However, this is also problematic. Jèrriais has never been the official language of the island and it is closely related to French. Both French and Jèrriais tie the island to its nearest neighbour visible across the water to the East and to the South.

The close relationship between *Oïl* dialects leads to a problem (highlighted in a chapter *Oïl, une unité trompeuse*) which Tricot deplores among the *malheurs des langues d'oïl*:

> *Il paraît que si la loi Deixonne a jugé indignes d'être enseignées dans les écoles certaines langues parlées dans l'hexagone c'est parce que ces langues ne sont pas françaises. Le corse serait un avatar de l'italien, l'alsacien de l'allemand, le flammand du néerlandais. Quant aux langues d'oïl, elles serait (sic) 'de la famille du français'. Adieu donc picard, poitevin, normand, wallon, champenois, lorrain, bourgignon, morvandiau, franc-comtois, francien, berrichon, angevin, gallo, saintongeais, anglo-normand qui fut jadis parlé des deux côtés de la Manche.* (Tricot, 1982, p. 38)

In *Contact Bulletin* (a journal of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages) dialects of the *langue d'Oïl* seem to be passed over as *variants* too close to French:

> *What has happened to the languages of France, other than French? Without counting the langues d'oil* (sic), *variants of the great French domain, or the languages of immigrant groups, we find 7 other languages.* (*Contact Bulletin*, 1991, p. 14)

Part Two: The link with a dying local dialect

The link between French and Jèrriais should not be overlooked. Spence (1993) makes a connection between the decline of Jèrriais this century and the decline in the importance of French:

> *The decline in the importance of French in Island culture contributed to the isolation of Jèrriais, and thus its decline* (Spence, 1993, p. 3)

Not all see the relationship between Jèrriais and French ever benefiting Jèrriais. According to Brasseur (1977), it is Jèrriais which supports the status of French in the Island rather than vice versa. He writes:

> *Le destin du français est pour une grande part lié, dans les îles de la Manche, à celui du parler local. Car tous les patoisants comprennent parfaitement le français et sont capables de le parler. Il est bien évident que lorsque le parler normand disparaîtra des îles, cette facilité disparaîtra du même coup.* (Brasseur, 1977, p. 99)

Unfortunately, not all historical writers on the subject make a clear distinction between Jèrriais and French. While some speak of French and bilingualism, others speak of trilingualism (possibly affording greater status to Jèrriais). It is clear, however, that in the days when teaching was through the medium of French, children who spoke Jèrriais at home learned French at school and later English too. Some saw French as a written form of their own native language and distinguished between *good French* and *Jersey French*.

The state of Jèrriais in the island today should not be isolated from that of French. While French once occupied a privileged position in Jersey, in education it has gone from being the medium of instruction to being taught as a foreign language only to some children from seven years of age, approximately half an hour a day. French teaching in UK primary schools was once exceptional. It is no longer. Even in the Isle of Man, where Manx has been introduced as a voluntary language, French has been taught to seven-year-olds and above for over six years now. (Jersey and the Isle of Man are outside the UK and EC.)

The teaching of Jèrriais today

The language has several varieties and despite the publication of the Le Maistre Jèrriais dictionary in 1966 and *Le Jèrriais pour tous* in 1985, it is doubtful if standardisation or codification has taken place.

Some very limited teaching of Jèrriais is taking place at primary level and adult evening classes in Jèrriais are run by the Jersey education department which has subsidised the beginners class to encourage learners to enroll. The beginners class is full for the 1996–97 session. Student numbers in recent years have been around 30 for the beginners class and 20 for each of the subsequent classes of intermediate and advanced standard. The heavily subsidised beginners classes cost the small sum of £5.00, others £21.00.

Eisteddfod

The local Eisteddfod has the following sections: arts and crafts, dancing, English speech and drama, French speech and drama, flower arranging, music, needlework, Norman French (*séthée jèrriaise* (meaning *soirée*, *th* pronounced as in the English definite article *the*)) and photography. The Norman French section was abandoned in 1979 and was resurrected in 1986. It now occupies two evenings of the festival, which would seem to indicate a remarkable recovery. However, over half of the performances since 1987 have been provided by adult evening class students and only a handful of children take part.

The *séthées* take the form of adjudicated performances including dialogues, poetry, songs and plays. Some of the class titles are as follows: *Lectuthe à livre ouvèrt, pièche de thiâtre, lectuthe prépathée d'san chouaix* . . .

Other Jèrriais activities

Several bodies are trying to preserve Jersey's language and heritage. These include the Don Balleine Trust, the Assembliée d'Jèrriais and the Société Jersiaise. There are regular Jèrriais slots on local television and radio and in the local paper.

The future of Jèrriais in primary schools

Representatives of the Don Balleine Trust have visited primary schools to try to gain support for their plans to teach Jèrriais as an extra-curricular activity. Local politicians have discussed the issues and are devising a questionnaire for a survey of the population on the subject. Students of the language are helping to devise teaching materials suitable for the very young, some working from Welsh and Irish courses. This renewed enthusiasm has, in part, been inspired by recent events in the Isle of Man. (See part three.) A relevant survey, apparently the only one of its kind, is outlined below.

The Kempson survey

In the final year of her BSc in geography, Giselle Kempson (1991) wrote a dissertation on Jèrriais in which she reported the results of a survey she had carried out in Jersey. The snowball method was used in an effort to reach an above average number of Jèrriais speakers. 316 people answered the questionnaire containing 16 questions. The question *Do you think children should learn Jèrriais at school?* prompted the following responses from four categories of resident as outlined below: (1) St Ouen (Jèrriais speakers), (2) St Ouen (non-speakers), (3) St Clement (Jèrriais speakers), (4) St Clement (non-speakers)

%	Strongly in favour	slightly in favour	no opinion	slightly against	strongly against
(1)	52.3	25.6	21.6	1.1	0.0
(2)	21.5	36.7	15.2	13.9	12.7
(3)	35.5	40.0	10.0	5.0	10.0
(4)	16.4	40.6	14.8	12.5	15.6

(Kempson, 1991, p. 44)

The figures seem encouraging, but the responses to this question were less markedly in favour than those to a question about preserving and promoting Jèrriais, possibly because teaching the language is not considered to be the best means of promoting it.

Kempson states that:

> *Many thought such a measure an impossibility and many, especially non-speakers, could not see that this would benefit their children, given the current state of Jèrriais.* (ibid., p. 44)

This view was quite predictable. Another view, unprompted and expressed by forty respondents, was less so. They suggested that

> *French be taught alongside English to encourage bilingualism in these two languages.* (ibid., p. 44)

One may well wonder which language may be used to preserve the heritage: French or Jèrriais? Should the island look inwards or outwards? Locals have a distinctive accent in English (often mistaken outside for a South African one) which may serve to mark them locally as Jersey born.

Part three: Jersey learns a lesson from the Isle of Man

Island similarities

Heartened by the Manx efforts to preserve island heritage, supporters of a plan to teach Jèrriais in Jersey primary schools have focused on the similarities in the island linguistic situations and plan to carry out a survey to determine the attitude of parents of children in Jersey primary schools to the idea of teaching Jersey Norman French as an extra-curricular activity in those schools. A 1992 poll in the Isle of Man determined that approximately 40% of parents would support teaching of the Manx language in primary schools. The Manx Education Committee calculated that some 500 to 600 pupils would opt to take up the language at that level, but the estimate was far surpassed when the enrolment took place and 1,949 primary pupils were signed up (467 in secondary school). This perceived success does not prove that the project will be beneficial in preserving the language. The Jersey situation is different.

Similarities in the island situations go beyond the fragile state of their minority local languages. Both islands are fiercely independent, have their own political systems, are tax havens, have tourism industries and have populations of approximately the same size (in 1991 the Jersey population had reached 84,082 and that of the Isle of Man 69,788). The Isle of Man (221 square miles) is considerably larger than Jersey (45 square miles).

The linguistic situations are close in so far as the local languages seem to be dying, although Jèrriais is in a healthier state than Manx. In 1860, there were supposedly 13,000 speakers of Manx, and in 1900 almost 5,000, while in 1960, the number of speakers of this Gaelic language (close to Scottish) was down to approximately 165. No precise figures are available for Jersey for the same period, but in a recent census (1989), 5,720 residents out of 82,809 claimed to be able to speak Jèrriais, that is to say 6.9% of the island population. These figures are almost certainly over optimistic and misleading. The Jèrriais-speaking population is also overwhelmingly elderly.

Island differences

A fundamental difference in the linguistic situations of the two islands lies in the identity of the two minority languages in question: Manx and Jèrriais. Manx, a Gaelic language closer to Scottish Gaelic than to Irish Gaelic, is distinct from any other language to which the schoolchildren are exposed. This is, unfortunately, not the case for Jèrriais since most children brought up in Jersey have English as their first language, but start to learn standard French in primary school around the age of seven, eight or nine.

Manx language teaching

Manx was once a subject available at GCE O level. A GCSE equivalent is now available for pupils starting their GCSE courses in September. A Manx language officer has been appointed and two teachers have been seconded. The renewed enthusiasm for teaching the language in local schools was prompted by the response to a Gallop poll: 34% of the population felt that Manx should be taught in the local schools. This is now voluntary and has been in the school timetable for the last 2–3 years for pupils starting from age 7. French has also been taught in primary schools to 7 to 11-year-olds for over six years.

The way ahead

Time will tell if two languages of the *langue d'Oïl* group can be taught effectively as foreign languages in the primary school, what the relationship between them will be and what their functions will become. The survey to be undertaken among parents of primary schoolchildren in Jersey during this school year may determine parental attitudes, but will certainly alert many to the rising status of Jèrriais in education. Whether it will convince parents of its value alongside French in school life is another matter. Past generations saw a close link between what they called Jersey French and good French. The appeal of Jèrriais today is its distinctiveness. It is difficult to see how the two may now be usefully taught and distinguished within or outside the curriculum.

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'French Letters' – a guide for correspondents

John Sampson University of Southampton

In a previous article I reviewed contemporary uses of *'truc'*, *'justement'* and *'quand même'*. In this second article on *'le parler du jour'*, I examine ways in which pupils' techniques for writing letters to French friends might be improved.

The registers required for personal letters (and the colloquial expressions contained therein) are as different from business letters and job applications as they are from Lesage and Bourget, and of course they have more in common with the registers involved in casual conversation. Many pupils will have limited experience of the latter, and I hope that this brief review may be useful.

I have analysed a large number of letters written both to myself and to some others during 1995 and 1996. All of these are from intelligent young people in their late teens and early twenties; all good friends, and therefore the style is relaxed and the register informal.

Not surprisingly, the major preoccupations and discussion areas closely reflect our own, and portray the written form of such speech events as greeting, thanking, conveying news, joking, complaining, discussing friends, conveying messages and so on. I will look at as many of these as space allows, and also make some brief comments on links, phatics and fillers.

1. Greetings

When opening the discourse, not a lot seems to have changed in the *'bonjour'* and *'salut'* areas, though *'Coucou, c'est moi!'* seems popular. Alternatives such as: *"Salut . . . [name]!"*, *"Alors comment vas-tu?"*, *"Merci pour . . ."*, *"Merci d'avoir écrit"*, *"J'ai reçu ta lettre . . ."*, *"Je dois tout d'abord . . ."*, and so on, may be useful.

2. News and gossip

(i) *"Alors, le groupe, c'est comment, au juste?"*

(ii) To express the simple but rather elusive *"You must be . . .* [for example] *quite busy at the moment)"*, the simple present of 'devoir' is all that they will need: *"Tu dois sûrement être très occupé en ce moment"*; *"Tu dois certainement préparer ton départ en vacances"*,

(iii) **Désormais.** Apart from the commoner use of 'désormais' (the sense of 'from now one'): *"Je recommence désormais à me concentrer sur mon travail . . ."*; *"Désormais il ne me reste plus qu'a bosser . . ."*, it is a useful stylistic alternative for the repetitive *'maintenant' or 'bientôt'*: *"Dans une semaine (et même moins désormais) nous nous verrons"*: *"Je suis beaucoup moins stressé désormais"*.

(iv) **'A lot' and 'Quite a lot'.** *"Enormément de . . ."*, *"Plein de . . ."* and *"Pas mal de . . ."* are now almost ubiquitous: *"J'ai plein de choses à te dire"*, *"J'ai pas mal réléchi depuis"*, *"Y'a pas mal de trucs qui me sont arrivés"*. *"Alors comme ça t'as pas mal de boulot?"*.

(v) Hyperbolics seem less *de rigueur* in French than they were in the eighties, and it is now less common to see the prefixes *'hypra-'*, *'mega-'*, *'hyper-'*, *'giga-'* and so on (although one may still find: *"Je te fais des mega bisous"*; see below). Most young writers now content themselves with the more moderate: *"C'est/C'était (vraiment/vachement/plutôt) sympa/chouette/bien/super/pas mal"*, or forms like *"Eh! Géniale ton idée de . . ."*.

(vi) I found a number of phrases that expressed things being just 'alright'; *"C'est déjà ça"* ("that's one [good] thing, anyway"), for example: *"Pas de* *nouvelles disputes à la maison, c'est déjà ça"* or: *"Ici tout va à peu près bien": "Ici rien de vraiment très passionant".*

3. Not-so-good news

(i) **Expressing difficulty or problems.** Most young French people now prefer 'pas évident' to 'difficile'. A more ambitious version of it would be: *"Ecrire en français n'a rien d'évident pour moi . . .".*

(ii) **Nul/Con.** It will be instructive to examine the differences between these heavily-used expletives. In the case of jokes/quips/comments: *"Ses blagues sont nulles"* is a neutral and basically friendly comment, tending to criticise the joke rather than the person telling it. Typical translations would be 'sad' or 'pathetic', but usually (in young company at least) in good humour. However, *"Ses blagues sont connes"* is a stronger statement, can be quite rude, and tends to reflect scornfully on the person, as well as on the joke. Either form, when muttered to oneself: *"Qu'est-ce j'suis con(ne)/nul(le)"* are mild types of self-chastisement, where the blame may not have been entirely one's own. A stronger form of self-criticism, however, is *"Quelle connasse"*, which implies that the blame lies entirely with yourself.

(iii) **General.** *"Là c'est pas terrible", "C'est vraiment le bordel, avec . . .", "Vraiment c'est du gâchis . . .".*

4. Changing the subject back to better things

"Comment ça va, sinon?", "Assez parlé de tout ça", "Assez parlé boutique", "Bon, allez, assez parlé boulot". This last example calls to mind the colloquial value of *'Allez . . .'.* Students would derive more pleasure, I think, when leaving a bar, a café or someone's house, if they were confident enough to use the form *"Bon, allez, au revoir!"*, rather than the simpler version, which any tourist is capable of.

The particle *"enfin bref"* (or its elliptical form, *". . . bref"*) is another colloquial way of returning to more pleasant matters if the content has been a bit negative. It is in very common use, and corresponds with the current popularity in English for applying *". . . whatever"* to the end of (almost) any sentence. It has also become a catch-phrase to end a list or some other kind of sentence; *". . . or whatever"*, and young people like to use it to trail off the end of any sentence that they cannot (or do not want to) elaborate. In this way both *"whatever"* and *"enfin bref"* have become quite versatile, and can mean any of the following: *". . . well, you could be right"; ". . . anyway"; ". . . never mind"; ". . . it doesn't matter"; ". . . you know what I mean"; ". . . that sort of thing".*

However, unlike *"whatever"*, *"enfin bref"* can *also* be used at the *beginning* of a sentence, and here its sense moves towards: *". . . but wait for it, . . .",* or *"But the thing is . . .",* as in: *"enfin bref, c'est pas le pire. . . ".*

5. Friends in common

(i) **Use of 'normal'.** *"J'ai pas vu Sally, mais c'est normal" (or "c'est un peu normal"),* i.e. *"I'm not (particularly) surprised".*

(ii) **News of friends.** *"J'ai pas eu de nouvelle de . . .", "J'ai eu François au téléphone cette semaine . . .", "Hier j'ai vu . . bidule . . comment déjà?" = ("I saw thingy yesterday; what's his/her name?"); "Comment il s'appelle (s'appelait) déjà?", "Que devient Fabrice?","Pas de nouvelles de Lucy et Matt. Je ne sais pas ce qu'ils deviennent".*

(iii) **'Give my love to. .'.** We all like to send our 'love' to our mutual friends; *"Give her a hug from me", "Tell Carine to be good"*, say that you are missing someone, and the like.

- **Greetings from home to your friend.** *"Tu as le bonjour de Nick"; "Emma te souhaite le bonjour/Emma te salue/Emma te fait un gros bisou".*
- **Greetings to others via friend.** *"Si tu vois Sylvie salue-la de ma part", "Souhaite-lui le bonjour", "Bisous à Marc de ma part", "Dis à Christophe d'être sage", "Tu lui fais de gros bisous"*, or the rather more intimate: *"Tu feras un gros calin à Nathalie de ma part".*

– **'Missing' somebody.** The expression of this in French still confuses students. They may have mastered *"Je lui manque"* and *"Elle me manque"*, but when trying to say *"he is going to miss her"*, or *"she is going to miss him"*, they will frequently be wide of the mark of the correct *"elle/il va lui manquer"*. It seems to be one of those where only practice works.

6. Links, particles and fillers

Letters are a form of written spoken conversation, and they frequently represent the repetition of past speech events. To help link thoughts and ideas while one is writing, it can be helpful to have a few links and fillers up your sleeve: *"Ah, au fait, . . ."*, *"Bon . . ."*, *"Bon et bien . . ." "Bon ben . . ."*, *"Eh oui! . . ." "Eh bien . . ."*, *"Tiens . . . "*, *"Bon enfin . . ."*. A common sentence link is *"Au fait, j'allais oublier . . ."*.

7. Ending

It is a pity that we can no longer finish our letters with the dignified and chivalrous French of the past: *"Il ne me reste plus qu'à prendre congé de vous, cher(chère) ami(e). Soyez assuré(e) de mon affection. Je reste votre tendre et dévoué(e).* We are these days stuck with the more prosaic: *"Voilà donc l'essentiel des nouvelles . . ."*, *"Bon j'arrête pour l'instant . . ."*, *"Je te laisse maintenent"*, *"Bon ben je dois laisser cela maintenant et aller . . .* [faire quelque chose]", *"Autrement rien de neuf"*, *"Voilà donc les nouvelles"*.

And finally, when the valedictories *"Je te fais de gros bisous"*, *"A bientôt"*, *"A très bientôt, "Je t'embrasse très fort"* are still standard, the use of *"allez"* can, once again, be stylistically effective used before any of the above; *"Bon allez, je t'embrasse très fort"*, and although there is an apparent clash of verb and honorific, the form is quite correct of course.

Conclusion. Very little of the above will be new to French language teachers, but I hope that by highlighting some more of the ways in which 'the kids' are currently writing, it may perhaps provide some material for a group exercise in this interesting, though rather neglected, area.

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Charles de Gaulle, navigateur métaphorique

Alan Pedley University of Exeter

Les Français et la mer

On a souvent l'impression que chez beaucoup de Français se cache un désir instinctif d'être marin. Ce qui pourrait expliquer le succès remarquable du programme de télévision, 'Thalassa', diffusé sur France 3 depuis plus de vingt ans. On se souvient aussi du fameux mot du footballeur français Eric Cantona, prononcé (en anglais!) dans une conférence de presse le 31 mars 1995. Pour exprimer sa colère contre la façon hystérique dont il avait été traité par les journalistes, il lance ce bel exemple d'une métaphore maritime: 'Quand les mouettes suivent le chalutier, c'est parce qu'elles espèrent que des sardines seront jetées à la mer.' Moins habitués au langage fleuri que leurs confrères français, les journalistes anglais n'ont pas tout de suite déchiffré ce message qui leur paraissait plutôt énigmatique. Les sens en était pourtant assez clair: les mouettes, ce sont les journalistes; la chalutier, c'est Cantona lui-même; les sardines, ce sont les déclarations du capitaine du chalutier (Cantona) destinées à être rapportées par les journalistes.

Pour tant de poètes et de romanciers français la mer a été utilisée comme symbole de la plupart des grands thèmes de l'expérience humaine: l'éternité, la mort, le danger, le mystère, les bouleversements, les voyages, le mouvement, l'immobilité, le calme, la permanence, la liberté, et j'en passe. Le poème de Baudelaire, 'l'Homme et la mer', résume bien tous ces thèmes.

De Gaulle et la mer

Le premier vers de ce poème, 'Homme libre, toujours tu chériras la mer!', nous amène au thème de cet article, à savoir l'attachement d'un homme d'Etat-auteur à la mer et surtout à la navigation maritime, en tant que procédé littéraire. Il s'agit du fondateur de la France Libre, Charles de Gaulle.

Beacoup d'auteurs bien sûr ont dû contribuer à la formation du goût maritime du général de Gaulle. Celui qui vient tout d'abord à l'esprit c'est Chateaubriand, dont le nom est cité à plusieurs reprises dans le *Mémoires de guerre* et dans les discours. Nous savons par ailleurs que les *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* étaient un des livres de chevet du général. Et la mer joue un rôle significatif dans l'œuvre de Chateaubriand, aussi bien en tant que thème qu'en tant que source métaphorique. Je vous donne un exemple typique:

> Mettons à profit le peu d'instants qui me restent; hâtons-nous de peindre ma jeunesse tandis que j'y touche encore: le navigateur, abandonnant pour jamais un rivage enchanté, écrit son journal à la vue de la terre qui s'éloigne et qui va bientôt disparaître.[1]

En ce qui concerne la réalité de la mer et de la navigation, ce serait une exagération d'en parler comme sujets substantiels de la vie ou de l'œuvre du général de Gaulle. Ceci dit, il est intéressant de noter que les expériences maritimes et les préoccupations navales ne manquent pas ni dans sa carrière, ni dans son œuvre. Et ces expériences ont souvent une valeur symbolique. On pense à sa participation en septembre 1940, à l'operation franco-britannique sur Dakar pour rallier les territoires de l'Afrique occidentale française à la France Libre. Le récit de cette aventure (ou plutôt mésaventure!) maritime couvre une dizaine de pages dans *l'Appel*, le premier tome des *Mémoires de guerre*. On est tenté de traiter cette expédition comme la concrétisation, et peut-être même l'inspiration, de la métaphore clef des *Mémoires*, c'est-à-dire celle du capitaine-chef du vaisseau-Etat.

On pense aussi aux deux tragédies navales françaises de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, symboles toutes les deux du gaspillage absurde du potentiel guerrier de la France, dû à la trahison de Vichy, à savoir la destruction d'une partie de la flotte française par les Anglais à Mers-el-Kebir le 4 juillet 1940 et le sabordage d'une autre partie de la flotte à Toulon le 26 novembre 1942. Dans ses *Mémoires* de Gaulle accorde une importance particulière à ces deux incidents qui font partie de cette adversité à laquelle un chef doit faire face.

On pense aussi à deux gestes tout à fait typiques du général, qui ne sont pas couverts dans les *Mémoires d'espoir* qui sont restés inachevés. En juillet 1967 il part pour le Canada où il prononcera sa fameuse petite phrase 'Vive le Québec libre!' Au lieu de prendre l'avion, de Gaulle choisit la navigation; il passe trois jours en mer à bord du croiseur *Colbert*. Il s'embarque à Brest et débarque symboliquement d'abord à St Pierre-et Miquelon, île française depuis le 18e siècle et enfin à Québec même, capitale de l'ancienne province française, comme le marin français Jacques Cartier avait fait en 1535

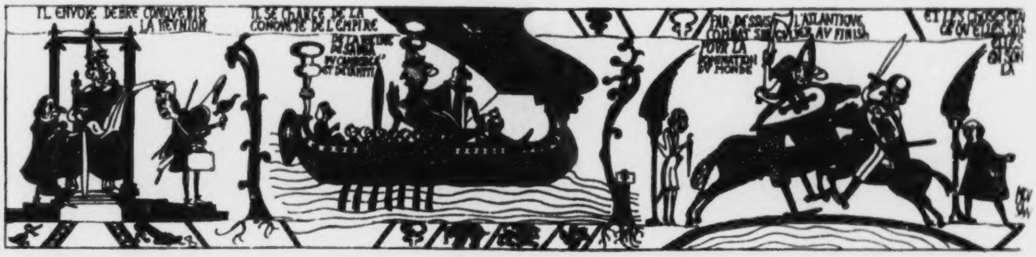
Quelques mois plus tard, le 8 février 1968, de Gaulle se rend à Toulon pour assister aux cérémonies religieuse et militaire en mémoire des cinquante-deux marins disparus le 27 janvier avec le sous-marin *Minerve*. Après les cérémonies, à la surprise de tout le monde, il monte à bord d'un autre sous-marin, l'*Eurydice*, qui effectue une sortie en mer et une plongée. Dans son allocution de Gaulle avait dit: 'Des marins sont morts en mer. Ils étaient des volontaires, c'est-à-dire qu'ils avaient d'avance accepté le sacrifice et qu'ils avaient fait un pacte avec le danger.' En faisant une plongée sous-marine lui-même, de Gaulle voulait montrer son admiration pour tous les marins. Curieusement et tragiquement, ce même sous-marin l'*Eurydice* devait sombrer aussi deux ans plus tard, en mars 1970, avec son équipage, tout près de l'endroit où le *Minerve* avait sombré en janvier 1968.

Le navire de l'Etat

Mais revenons au sujet plus précis de cet exposé, à savoir, de Gaulle, navigateur métaphorique. L'emploi des métaphores dans les *Mémoires*, c'est un aspect qui pourrait paraître de prime abord, n'offrir qu'un intérêt marginal; mais petit à petit on se rend compte qu'il s'agit d'un exemple assez frappant de la manière dont l'auteur réussit un mariage parfait de la forme et du fond de son ouvrage. C'est peut-être en lisant la dernière phrase du deuxième chapitre de *l'Appel*, que le lecteur est frappé pour la première fois par une allusion métaphorique à la mer: 'je m'apparaissais à moi-même, seul et démuni de tout, comme un homme au bord d'un océan qu'il prétendrait franchir à la nage'.[2] Ce double thème de l'adversité et de la solitude est introduit par la décision dramatique de De Gaulle, le 17 juin 1940, de quitter la France pour Londres, afin de continuer, tout seul, la lutte française contre l'Allemagne. Il n'aurait pas pu mieux communiquer la folie apparente de ce geste. La métaphore gaullienne n'est donc pas un ornement stylistique; elle est plutôt un appui capital de la thématique de l'ouvrage en question.

Les métaphores sont assez nombreuses

L'ÉPOPÉE DE CHARLES LE CONQUÉRANT


IL ENVOIE DEBRE CONQVERIR LA REVNION
IL SE CHARGE DE LA CONQVETE DE L'EMPIRE
PAR DESSUS L'ATLANTIQVE COMBAT SINGVLIER AV FINISH POVR LA DOMINATION DV MONDE

dans ces quatre tomes, étant donné qu'il s'agit de la littérature non-romanesque. Déjà dans ses quatre livres d'avant-guerre, *la Discorde chez l'ennemi, le Fil de l'épée, Vers l'armée de métier* et *la France et son armée*, de Gaulle avait montré son goût pour la langue imagée, qu'il s'agisse de comparaisons, de locutions pittoresques ou de métaphores. Dans les *Mémoires* la plupart de ces métaphores se rapportent aux quatre thèmes principaux de ces ouvrages: les obstacles, le conflit, le chef et l'unité. Quant aux sources de ces métaphores, elles s'inspirent de trois domaines: premièrement la mer et la navigation; deuxièmement le monde de la nature en général mais en particulier le temps et les conditions climatiques; et troisièmement le théâtre.

L'élément clef de son vocabulaire maritime et nautique c'est le navire, dans lequel on voyage sur l'eau, on navigue. Il s'agit bien sûr, et je cite une phrase qu'on trouve dans les *Mémoires d'espoir*, du 'navire de l'Etat', et dans la plupart des cas cet Etat, c'est la France. L'Etat-navire est menacé par une multitude de dangers. S'il ne les évite pas, il risque de 'chavirer', de 'sombrer', de 'couler', d' 'échouer' ou de 'faire naufrage'. L'auteur n'emploie pas toujours le mot 'navire' bien sûr; parfois c'est 'le bateau', ou 'le vaisseau', ou 'la barque', ou 'l'esquif', ou 'la nacelle' ou 'la nef'. Quelques exemples: dans *l'Unité* (le deuxième tome des *Mémoires de guerre*) nous lisons: 'La France a failli sombrer';[3] dans *le Salut* (le troisième tome) nous lisons:

> Voici, en effet, le terme de l'oppression de la France, mais aussi le dénouement de la dramatique secousse qui fut sa libération. Des faits sont accomplis qui rouvrent au vaisseau la mer libre, après lui avoir évité d'être coulé au départ.[4]

Toujours dans le même tome, nous lisons: 'Comme les vagues pressées déferlent sur le navire en train de sombrer, ainsi les forces alliées submergent l'Allemagne en perdition.'[5]

Quels sont les dangers qui menacent le navire de l'Etat? Les 'tempêtes', les 'orages', les 'rafales de vent', les 'ouragans', les 'cyclones', les 'tornades', les 'vagues'. Certains dangers sont plus insidieux: les 'écueils', les 'récifs', les 'caps', les 'sirènes', les 'brumes', les 'sables', les 'galets', les 'courants' et les 'serpents de mer'. Quelques exemples: dans *l'Unité* nous lisons 'Sous les flots de la confiance du peuple, les récifs de la politique ne laissent pas d'affleurer.'[6] Dans les *Mémoires d'espoir* (il s'agit de Berlin): 'Comme le serpent de mer sortant de l'onde, le projet soviétique d'institution d'une soi-disant ville libre est venu au jour une fois de plus.'[7]

L'unité nationale

Comment échapper à ces dangers? En restant unis bien sûr et en évitant les divisions internes (dont le meilleur exemple était le conflit entre Vichy et la Résistance). Là encore c'est la mer qui symbolise le mieux l'unité pour de Gaulle. Le 26 août 1944 les Parisiens libérés l'accueillent:

> Devant moi, les Champs-Elysées! Ah! C'est la mer! Une foule immense est massée de part et d'autre de la chaussée. Peut-être deux millions d'âmes. Les toits aussi sont noirs de monde. A toutes le fenêtres s'entassent des groupes compacts, pêle-mêle avec des drapeaux. Des grappes humaines sont accrochées à des échelles, des mâts, des réverbères. Si loin que porte ma vue, ce n'est qu'une houle vivante, dans le soleil, sous le tricolore.[8]

L'unité ne suffit pas. Il faut aussi que les marins (le peuple) aient un bon capitaine, un bon pilote, un bon guide, un bon chef. 'Je m'assure', écrit de Gaulle dans *le Salut*, 'que la Résistance offre au pays de grandes capacités politiques et administratives, pourvu qu'il y ait un capitaine au gouvernail de l'Etat.'[9] Le thème du chef, déjà traité par de Gaulle dans *le Fil de l'épée* en 1932 est d'une importance primordiale dans les *Mémoires*. L'image du capitaine guidant son navire et ses marins à travers les périls d'un long voyage jusqu'à son port d'attache, grâce à son utilisation adroite du 'gouvernail', de 'la barre', des 'voiles', de 'la boussole', des 'bouées de sauvetage' et des 'étoiles', et grâce à sa capacité pour 'louvoyer'et 'manœuvrer', communique parfaitement le message de l'auteur-chef qui veut apprendre à ses lecteurs-sujets comment reconnaître les qualités du bon chef, celui qui serait capable de mener la France vers la grandeur, à savoir le courage, la fermeté, le prestige, le goût du risque, le prévoyance et la ruse.

Morceaux de bravoure

De temps en temps de Gaulle donne libre cours à son penchant pour la métaphore maritime et tisse un morceau de bravoure composé d'une seule image prolongée. Je vais vous donner deux exemples. Dans le premier, tiré des *Mémoires d'espoir*, l'auteur justifie les détours de sa politique algérienne:

> Pour accomplir cette politique, telle était ma stratégie. Quant à la tactique, je devrais régler la marche par étapes, avec précaution. Ce n'est que progressivement, en utilisant chaque secousse comme l'occasion d'aller plus loin, que j'obtiendrais un courant de consentement assez fort pour emporter tout. Au contraire, si de but en blanc j'affichais mes intentions, nul doute que, sur l'océan des ignorances alarmées, des étonnements scandalisés, des malveillances coalisées, se fût levée dans tous les milieux une vague de stupeurs et de fureurs qui eût fait chavirer le navire. Sans jamais changer de cap, il me faudrait donc manœuvrer, jusqu'au moment où, décidément, le bon sens aurait percé les brumes.[10]

Dans l'autre exemple, qui vient du *Salut*, l'auteur des *Mémoires de guerre* parle du départ de Churchill, déposé de ses fonctions à la suite des élections législatives de juin 1945. Il faut se rappeler que de Gaulle s'était presque modelé sur le Premier Ministre britannique dès leur première rencontre en juin 1940.

> Cependant, si différentes que fussent les conditions dans lesquelles Churchill et de Gaulle avaient eu à accomplir leur œuvre, si vives qu'aient été leurs querelles, ils n'en avaient pas moins, pendant plus de cinq années, navigué côte à côte, en se guidant d'après les mêmes étoiles, sur la mer démontée de l'Histoire. La nef que conduisait Churchill était maintenant amarrée. Celle dont je tenais la barre arrivait en vue du port. Apprenant que l'Angleterre invitait à quitter son bord le capitaine qu'elle avait appelé quand se déchaînait la tempête, je prévoyais le moment où je quitterais le gouvernail de la France, mais de moi-même, comme je l'avais pris.[11]

Ce portrait maritime rappelle un autre portrait maritime, celui d'un capitaine dont le navire n'est pas arrivé à bon port, à savoir le maréchal Pétain. Il est tiré de *l'Appel:* 'Hélas! les années, par-dessous l'enveloppe, avaient rongé son caractère. [. . .] La vieillesse est un naufrage. Pour que rien ne nous fût épargné, la vieillesse du maréchal Pétain allait s'identifier avec le naufrage de la France.'[12] Heureusement pour les marins, un autre capitaine, un certain Charles de Gaulle, a réussi à renflouer leur navire et à le guider vers son port, autrement dit, le salut.

Pourquoi cet attachement chez de Gaulle à la métaphore maritime? Tout simplement, c'est un exemple parmi des douzaines d'autres que j'aurais pu choisir, de la façon dont l'écrivain se sert de l'écriture pour rehausser son prestige et son rôle politique. L'autorité suprême du capitaine sur ses marins et son vaisseau, c'est l'image parfaite du rôle que de Gaulle voulait s'attribuer vis-à-vis de ses concitoyens. La métaphore c'est un langage symbolique. Aucun chef politique du XXe siècle n'a mieux que de Gaulle apprécié la valeur des symboles.

Notes

1. Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, tome I, p. 117 (Livre de Poche).
2. C. de Gaulle, *Mémoires de guerre, L'Appel*, p. 86 (Presses pocket).
3. *L'Unité*, p. 358.
4. *Le Salut*, p. 54.
5. Ibid., p. 206.
6. *L'Unité*, p. 366.
7. *Mémoires d'espoir*, p. 277.
8. *L'Unité*, p. 364.
9. *Le Salut*, p. 152.
10. *Mémoires d'espoir*, p. 53.
11. *Le Salut*, p. 245.
12. *L'Appel*, pp. 78–79.

News and Notes

Les articles suivants sont tirés de *L'Univers du Français*, lettre trimestrielle de la FIPF.

Le Salon International des Langues Vivantes, des Cultures et des Voyages «Expolangues»

Il aura lieu du 29 janvier au 2 février 1997 à la Grande Halle de la Villette à Paris et fêtera ses 15 années d'existence.

15, c'est aussi le nombre de pays membres de l'Union Européenne, laquelle a choisi Expolangues pour élaborer un projet de «Semaine Européenne des Langues». Une initiative de grande envergure, qui internationalisera, enrichira et dynamisera cette manifestation.

Après le Portugal, l'Allemagne, la Turquie, Expolangues, édition 97, aura le grand plaisir d'accueillir avec les hommages dus à un pays hôte d'honneur, son cousin d'outre- Atlantique, le Canada, son bilinguisme et ses langues autochtones.

Grâce à ces événements exceptionnels induisant une campagne de communication renforcée et entamée très en amont, Expolangues 97 s'annonce particulièrement riche.

Ne le manquez surtout pas!

Le Rapport sur l'état de la Francophonie dans le monde

Le rapport 1995 sur «l'état de la Francophonie dans le monde», tiré à 2000 exemplaires, est épuisé depuis le 1 er janvier 1996. Il touche un public national et international et des parties importantes de ce document sont largement utilisées dans la presse ou dans des rapports officiels.

Le rapport 1996, dont la sortie est prévue dans la première quinzaine du mois de janvier 1997, comprendra trois parties: l'actualité francophone, les données nouvelles, les études.

Plusieurs dossiers inédits sont en cours de rédaction:

- «Les enseignements bilingues lorsque le français est langue partenaire»;
- «La promotion de la Francophonie dans le monde»;
- «La presse francophone dans le monde»;
- «La coopération décentralisée francophone»;

à partir d'une étude menée avec le Ministère de l'Intérieur (France).

Conseil international d'Etudes Francophones (CIEF)

Le CIEF tiendra son prochain Congrès mondial du 10 au 17 mai 1997 en Guadeloupe.

En plus d'une centaine de sessions pluridisciplinaires de haute qualité, le congrès comportera des réceptions de gala, des rencontres d'auteurs francophones, une exposition de livres, ainsi que des excursions. La présence de conférenciers d'honneur et des responsables de divers organismes et associations du monde francophone.

Le CIEF est un organisme à but non lucratif dont l'objectif est le développement des études, de la recherche, des publications et des productions francophones ou portant sur la francophonie dans le monde.

Pour toutes informations, s'adresser à:

Ginette Adamson, directrice générale du CIEF
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La langue française au futur

Par **Patrick Champagne**, Sociologue

Appauvrir ou enrichir

Le français n'est plus tout à fait le même que celui que parlaient nos grands-parents. Il évolue sans cesse. Pour certains, notre langue serait en train de s'appauvrir. Le sociologue Partrick Champagne considère au contraire que le français ne cesse de s'enrichir grâce aux nouveaux langages, notamment celui des jeunes des banlieues.

On se pose régulièrement la question de savoir si le français s'appauvrit. Cette question n'est-elle pas du même ordre que se demander périodiquement si, à l'école, 'le niveau baisse'. Ce type de question traduit une inquiétude suscitée par la diffusion de tout un langage parlé dans les banlieues, notamment par des jeunes issus de l'immigration.

Certains artistes tels Coluche, Les Inconnus, ou Guy Bedos, ont fortement contribué, à travers leurs sketches à rendre populaires les expressions propres aux jeunes de certaines banlieues populaires. Mais peut-on dire pour autant que cette diffusion 'appauvrit' la langue française?

Il faut prendre une juste mesure de cette 'invasion' du langage dit 'populaire' dans la langue standard. En premier lieu, la population principalement concernée est une population surtout adolescente et, de plus, essentiellement masculine. Chez les jeunes, l'usage d'un langage distinctif n'est pas un phénomène nouveau. Chaque nouvelle génération s'invente ses manières de parler destinées à marquer sa différence par rapport aux adultes. Cela ne signifie pas que ce langage se substitue au français standard. Il s'agit de manières de parler entre soi et qui disparaissent souvent avec l'âge adulte. D'ailleurs, à l'école, les jeunes savent très bien faire la différence et ne parlent pas de la même manière entre eux, ou lorsqu'ils s'adressent à leur professeur, ou lorsqu'ils font une dissertation, etc.

Peut-on dire que ces manières de parler qui s'introduisent dans la langue légitime, c'est-à-dire dans la langue qui est reconnue par l'école, soient 'populaires'? La langue populaire n'existe pas comme telle. Ce qui existe, dans les milieux populaires, comme d'ailleurs dans les autres groupes sociaux, ce sont des manières de parler, variables selon les situations. Les conversations de café, les discussions dans les groupes d'adolescents, les réunions festives, les interpellations sur les marchés, etc., sont autant de situations dans lesquelles les performances linguistiques plus ou moins grandes sont socialement encouragées. Ce qui passe dans le langage standard, ce n'est pas le 'langage populaire' mais surtout le produit de ces inventions avec les mots, que pratiquent les membres des classes populaires. Et si ces tournures amusantes, ces bons mots, ces expressions étranges ou inhabituelles circulent beaucoup et passent si facilement dans la langue standard, n'est-ce pas précisément parce qu'ils sont le produit des mêmes jeux de langage que ceux qui sont pratiqués avec la langue savante, tels qu'ils se pratiquent par exemple en littérature, en poésie et même en philosophie?

Une langue est faite pour être utilisée, pratiquée. Et non pas conservée et comme arrêtée à un moment de son histoire.

Découverte

Chaîne d'origine: TV5
Production: Société Radio-Canada
Animateur: Charles Tisseyre
Réalisateurs: une équipe de Radio-Canada
Durée: 26 minutes
Emission: hebdomadaire
Diffusion: dimanche à 7 h 30

Concept:

Conjuguer connaissances scientifiques, qualité visuelle et linguistique, en traitant des sujets d'actualité. Le magazine vise à apporter une contribution dynamique à l'intégration de la télévision dans les stratégies d'enseignement, tant du français que des autres disciplines.

Contenu:

L'émission toujours axée sur un thème scientifique traite de deux à quatre sujets et s'articule autour de reportages, d'entretiens qui sont présentés et commentés.

Les thèmes retenus fournissent l'occasion de jeter un nouvel éclairage sur des sujets que le quotidien risque parfois de banaliser. L'analyse menée en cours d'émission, vise à dévoiler et expliquer certains aspects jusque-là inconnus ou mal compris. Les commentaires contribuent à cerner une problématique, à soulever des questions et à dégager des éléments de réponses. Chaque reportage suscite une réflexion plus approfondie sur le sujet abordé.

Fiches pédagogiques:

Pour soutenir les enseignants, TV5 offre gratuitement les fiches d'exploitation pédagogique qui traitent de la compréhension de l'emission, (transcription du texte, du commentaire), de l'expression orale et écrite, de la grammaire et du vocabulaire.

Pour les obtenir s'adresser à:

TV5 – Apprendre et Enseigner
15 rue Cognacq-Jay – 75341
Paris Cédex 07
Tél: (33) 1 44 18 55 90
Fax: (33) 1 44 18 55 83

Si on chantait . . . d'Eric Vincent

La première cassette de la série «si on chantait» vient de sortir, accompagnée de son livret.

La FIPF, qui parraine cette collection, a obtenu l'autorisation pour les associations d'adapter librement ce livret, sans reversement d'aucun droit à l'éditeur. Nous remercions l'éditeur et les auteurs pour cette générosité.

«La Fédération internationale des professeurs de français (FIPF), consciente de l'apport riche en motivation et plaisir que constitue l'exploitation pédagogique de la chanson, a décidé de lancer une nouvelle série de cassettes de chansons populaires francophones. Chaque cassette comportera une sélection de chansons d'un même auteur interprète, et sera accompagnée d'un livret pédagogique contenant tous les textes ainsi que des exercices divers destinés aux classes de français. Dans le livret, les chansons apparaîtront dans leur ordre sur la cassette. Les professeurs n'auront qu'à puiser dans les chansons et exercices ceux qui correspondent le mieux au niveau et aux intérêts de leurs classes.

Cette cassette et son livret sont les premiers de la série. Le sommaire indique le sujet de chaque chanson et sa difficulté relative (du point de vue du vocabulaire, de la grammaire, de la structure et des thèmes):

* chanson d'un abord assez facile,
** chanson plus compliquée,
*** chanson de niveau avancé

- La **Mise en train** familiarise les élèves avec le vocabulaire, la grammaire et les thèmes de la chanson, avant l'écoute.
- La deuxième partie, **A l'écoute**, est le cœur du livret. Là, les élèves font connaissance avec le texte même de la chanson. On y trouve une grande variété d'exercices. Dans certains cas, les éléves commencent par écouter la chanson, après quoi ils cochent les réponses appropriées dans de grilles ou dessinent une «structure vide» qu'ils remplissent progressivement. Dans d'autres cas, ils commencent avec des extraits du texte ou des textes lacunaires, qu'ils complètent, avant de vérifier leur intuition, en écoutant la chanson.
- Les **Regards textuels** offrent le texte intégral de la chanson, accompagné d'explications de vocabulaire difficile et de notes culturelles.
- **Pour aller plus loin** clôt le travail sur chaque chanson. Dans cette derniére partie, les élèves sont invités à faire des activités d'élargissement: la rédaction de publicités, de lettres ou de fax qui résument la chanson, la création de «couplets manquants» (c'est-à-dire originaux) à ajouter à la chanson.
- A la fin du livret se trouvent quatre **Exercices d'ensemble**. Ces activités mobilisent, de façon imaginative, les connaissances des caractéristiques thématiques et musicales de toute la cassette.»

Chris French
Auteur du livret pédagogique

Le Monde d'Eric Vincent

Auteur de quatre albums – *Harmoniques* (1980), *Un Voyage pour l'immédiat* (1983), *Lula* (1988) et *Un pays quelque part* (1993) – Eric Vincent est toujours entouré d'excellents musiciens. En concert, son énergie et la qualité de sa voix ne manquent jamais de susciter un accueil enthousiaste, et laissent auprès de ses publics variés des souvenirs inoubliables. Sa guitare reste sa fidèle compagne, avec laquelle il s'envolera demain encore vers de nouvelles rencontres.

«Guk Euskaraz»*: nous, on parle basque!

Les guides touristiques le précisent avant toute chose: Sare compte parmi les plus beaux villages de France. Bien campé sur les premiers contreforts des Pyrénées à quelques kilomètres de l'océan Atlantique, Sare est d'abord basque.

Au creux du golfe de Gascogne, les gens tiennent à leur identité, la défendent et cultivent leurs particularismes. Bien avant d'être Français (ou Espagnol puisque le pays basque est partagé entre ces deux pays) le Basque est Basque. Certains vont jusqu'à prôner l'indépendance, mais la plupart ne remettent pas en cause les souverainetés nationales. Pourtant, ils militent tous à leur manière pour garder vivante leur société.

«Nous sommes les indigènes de l'Europe» m'a, un jour, lancé un jeune Basque dans un café de la région. L'origine de leur langue se perd dans la nuit des temps et il faudrait bien des pages pour mettre en lumière tout ce qui distingue ce petit peuple de pêcheurs et de bergers du reste du continent. Il suffit pourtant d'aller un dimanche dans un village comme Sare pour observer certaines coutumes vivantes et en aucun cas folkloriques.

Dieu et la langue, deux religions pour le basque

A dix heures du matin, ce dimanche d'hiver, la place du village est déserte. La pluie et le vent glacial font fuir toute trace humaine au dehors et les cloches essaient de ramener à l'office quelques fidèles qui fendent le mauvais temps pour arriver jusqu'à l'église. C'est un large vaisseau ceint sur trois côtés de galeries en bois superposées. Les hommes y prennent place tandis que les femmes s'agenouillent dans la nef. La messe est bilingue. La langue basque domine et tous les chants sont repris dans l'idiome local. Les femmes seules entonnent les couplets et les hommes les rejoignent pour les refrains. Chaque moment important de la vie s'accompagne de chants ou de musique.

Un peu avant midi, les fidèles se dispersent. Les dames courent à la maison surveiller l'agneau qui mijote en ragoût et les hommes se dirigent au café. On parle naturellement en basque.

Le visiteur de passage est intrigué par la réputation du village: on dit que la contrebande est une activité courante dans la commune. Un vieux monsieur explique sans crainte qu'il serait dommage de ne pas profiter des trente-trois kilomètres de frontière que possède Sare pour faire un peu d'argent!

Les sarois, en majorité agriculteurs, améliorent leurs revenus depuis des siècles en pratiquant ce qu'ils appellent dans un clin d'œil «l'import-export». Mais les nouvelles lois européennes et l'ouverture des frontières les attristent: «C'est une catastrophe nationale» confie un homme qui encore récemment passait alcool, cigarettes et bétail en Espagne.

A une heure, les rues du village se vident complètement et tout le monde se donne rendez-vous à la salle des fêtes, dans l'après-midi pour suivre les bertsulari.

Poètes et bergers

Les bertsulari improvisent des textes chantés autour d'un thème donné par un meneur de jeu. Ils perpétuent une tradition vieille d'au moins trois siècles qui faisait briller, pendant les fêtes de villages, des bergers illettrés mais poètes. Une assistance fournie s'est déplacée malgré le mauvais temps pour suivre ces «faiseurs de vers» (traduction littérale de bertsulari).

L'art est codifié: ils doivent improviser sur un canevas des syllabes bien précis qui impose la mélodie et la rime est obligatoire. Ce sont de véritables joutes oratoires où les initiés surenchérissent sur les propos du concurrent en essayant d'être le plus subtil possible. Dans ce sport cérébral de haut niveau, la recherche du mot d'esprit se fait dans l'instant, l'acte et la réflexion doivent être simultanés.

Le public applaudit, rit, reprend en chœur la chute des histoires les plus remarquables et apprécie ce jeu où l'humour et l'esprit croisent le fer avec brio grâce aux mots.

Tout se joue, là encore, en langue basque. Un voisin de rang peut sans problème vous traduire le sujet de l'improvisation et sans comprendre la langue, on suit même le duel de l'intonation et l'inflexion de la voix, sur les sentiments qui se dégagent du chant.

Tous les thèmes sont abordés. Les sujets sociaux, poétiques, loufoques se mèlent pendant une heure et demie. La tradition a manqué de disparaître, mais aujourd'hui des jeunes de vingt ans viennent se confronter à des betsulari plus chevronnés.

Ici aussi, les Basques vivent simplement un quotidien qui leur est cher, sachant adapter les vieilles traditions au monde contemporain sans jamais verser dans les reconstitutions folklorisantes. La langue et les coutumes restent les meilleurs repères de leur identité.

Ce dimanche à Sare, vous pourrez le suivre sur RFI dans «Nous n'avons qu'une terre», le dimanche 19 mai à 8 heures T.U.

Ludovic Dunod
RFI

*titre d'une chanson populaire basque

Citations

La table ronde organisée à Tôkyô a donc donné lieu à des débats aussi brillants que la qualité des invités pouvait le laisser supposer. Comment mieux évoquer l'œuvre de ces écrivains qu'en leur laissant eux-mêmes la parole? Nous reprendrons ici quelques uns de leurs propos:

Tahar Ben Jelloun

J'ai été nourri de culture populaire mais j'ai tellement souffert de la répression que je laissais exprimer ma souffrance en français parce que la langue arabe, c'était la mienne et que j'ai exprimé ma souffrance dans la langue de l'autre parce que c'était la langue du voisin à qui on dit «j'ai mal».

Raphaël Confiant

Il existe deux types fondamentaux d'écrivains francophones: ceux de la francophonie libre, les Irlandais, les Russes, les Québécois et ceux de la francophonie contrainte, qui sont les victimes d'une violence de l'Histoire. Il faut distinguer les pays qui disposent une langue écrite et ceux qui ne disposent que de langue orale. C'est seulement une fois que j'ai pu écrire en créole, dans ma proper langue, que j'ai été plus serein pour écrire en français. En écrivant en français, j'ai alors trouvé une forme de francophonie libre.

Ismail Kadaré

La littérature est une fiction, une création. Bien sûr elle parle de la réalité mais c'est une vision complètement différente . . . J'ai une relation affective avec la langue française: écrivain isolé, enfermé dans un sous-système totalitaire. J'ai rencontré par hasard un traducteur albanais qui avait fait ses études en France. Il avait fait quatorze ans de prison pendant lesquelles, la nostalgie du français l'avait habité; il a sublimé la langue française et il est devenu traducteur. C'est donc par hasard que mon premier livre est passé dans le monde grâce au français. Le français, c'est une deuxième langue pour moi, bien que je n'écrive pas en français.

Henri Lopes

Je ne sais pas si la francophonie est une communauté solidaire. J'ai toujours remarqué avec beaucoup d'étonnement que les écrivains français n'appartenaient pas à la francophonie . . . Le congolais n'étant pas écrit, je n'ai pas eu le choix, j'ai écrit en français. Le français est maintenant une langue africaine . . . En tant que romancier, je suis un menteur, l'essentiel est de bien mentir et de mentir vrai. Si vous voulez connaître le Congo à travers mes livres, vous le manquerez, car moi je parle d'un Congo «intérieur».

Antonine Maillet

L'Acadie est un peu le paradis perdu. Il a fallu que j'écrive pour le trouver. Tout écrivain écrit parce qu'il se cherche et plus on est petit, plus on a besoin d'une grande place. Je me suis découverte Acadienne mais ce n'était pas un pays, il a été pris par d'autres. Alors il fallait le retrouver dans le temps. La langue acadienne a des mots que la France a perdus. Elle est en quelque sorte revenue de déportation. On ne savait pas que l'Acadie était encore vivante et que les 95 mille mots qui manquent à la langue française, étaient passés ailleurs.

Andreï Makine

Un écrivain francophone se dit toujours qu'il y a une seule francophonie, c'est la sienne. On absolutise son expérience, mais à écouter Henri Lopes son message culturel complexe, à entrendre Tahar Ben Jelloun et sa francophonie amoureuse, je me dis qu'il n'y pas qu'une francophonie dans l'écriture, mais des francophonies.

Yves Simon

Il y a une vraie différence entre l'écriture du romancier et l'écriture banale. Le temps de l'écriture est un temps singulier. Le temps consacré à l'écriture, c'est du temps pris au temps.

Une Lettre de TV5

Monsieur le Président

Au cours du IXe Congrès de la Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français à Tokyo auquel TV5 a activement participé, nous avons pu mesurer l'intérêt porté par les professeurs de français pour la télévision en langue française. Intérêt à la fois pour se ressourcer et pour développer un enseignement à partir de documents authentiques.

Dans le documentaire présenté en direct à Tokyo que TV5 a tourné à partir des trois classes d'Allemagne, Ghana, Roumanie, gagnantes du concours 'Chantez TV5', sur l'enseignement du français dans ces trois pays: tous les élèves disent leur désir d'être immergés dans un bain de culture francophone et leur besoin d'images de la réalité d'aujourd'hui.

Comme nous l'avons dit sur place à Tokyo, TV5 s'efforce de mettre à disposition des enseignants des 'modes d'emploi' de TV5 per divers moyens dont l'édition d'une brochure 'Apprendre et Enseigner avec TV5', analyse du concept et du contenu d'environ 70 émissions de la chaîne, accompagnées d'exploitations pédagogiques-type fournies par des professeurs gagnants de nos concours ou par des organismes de formation spécialisés dans le FLE. Ce document est à la fois distribué gratuitement aux membres de notre fichier et mis en ligne sur internet.

Nous souhaitons intensifier notre collaboration avec les associations de professeurs de français pensant qu'elles sont pour TV5 qui est une télévision généraliste, le garant de la validité de notre appui auprès des enseignants et les relais de démultiplication de l'information.

Dans la mesure où l'association que vous présidez est désormais sur notre fichier, vous serez destinataire plusieurs fois par an d'informations ciblées: mise à jour de la brochure 'Apprendre et Enseigner', annonce de concours, de programmations exceptionnelles, réponse à des questionnaires pour mieux connaître nos interlocuteurs . . .

Par ailleurs, TV5 édite à la fois un programme hebdomadaire et pour l'Afrique, un mensuel des programmes qui sont vendus par abonnement. Nous vous proposons à titre priviligié d'en être destinataire gratuitement. Vous voudrez bien nous adresser un courrier dans ce sens si cela vous intéresse.

Nous vous demandons de bien vouloir à la fois nous faire part de vos suggestions et largement diffuser les informations auprès de vos adhérents.

En vous remerciant pour votre collaboration et nous réjouissant des rencontres faites lors du Congrés de Tokyo, je vous prie de croire, Monsieur le Président à l'assurance de mes salutations respectueuses.

Dominique Martineau
Chargée de mission pour le Développement

Coup d'œil sur les programmes de TV5.

Contact:

00 33 1 44 18 55 66
19 rue Cognacq-Jay
75341 PARIS CEDEX 07

Books and Materials received

The following books and materials have been received from the publishers. Those items marked * are available for review by telephoning 0113 267 9258, after 6 pm.

* **Rendez-vous.** Rosi McNab. *Heinemann. 1996.*

1A	Chez moi.	*ISBN 0 435 37706 X*
1B	Chez moi.	*ISBN 0 435 37707 8*
2A	On va en France.	*ISBN 0 435 37708 6*
2B	On va en France.	*ISBN 0 435 37709 4*

The above are student modules, available in packs of six, price £22.50.

Other modules will be published, including a revision book. There are also teacher's resources, a resource and assessment file and a cassette pack, but not sent for review. **Rendez-vous** is a self-standing French course for foundation GCSE, and is also suitable for a wide range of non-examination courses.

* **Developing Dictionary Skills in French.** Martine Pillette. *Harper Collins 1996. ISBN 0 00 320194 5. £25.00.* Photocopiable worksheets for use at 11–16, with special emphasis on 16 + examinations.

* **New Breakthrough French.** Stéphanie Rybak. *Macmillan. Third edition 1995. ISBN 0 333 63710.0. £10.99.* A complete up-date of the popular adult and further education course. The cassettes have also been remastered, but are not available for review.

* **French Vocabulary Through Puzzles.** Gillian Taylor. *Hodder and Stoughton. Second edition. 1996. £18.99.* Aimed at KS 3 (or lower ability KS 4), this revised edition contains fifty photocopiable puzzles (crosswords, anagrams, wordsearches, etc.)

* **African Francophone Writing.** Edited by Laïla Ibnifassi and Nicki Hitchott. *Berg. 1996. ISBN 1 85973 014 0. £12.95.* From the Berg French Studies series, general editor John E. Flower. A comprehensive overview of African writing in the Francophone literary world

* **Notre Librairie: Cinq ans de Littératures, 1991–1995, Afrique Noire 1.** Editor, Jean-Louis Joubert. *Numéro 125, janvier–mars 1996. Published by CLEF, 5, rue Rousselet, 75007 Paris. Vente au numéro: 60 francs. Abonnement: étranger 300 francs.*

* **Comment Dit-On . . .? A Vocabulary for GCSE.** Paul Humberstone. *Hodder and Stoughton. 1996. ISBN 0 340 65554 2. £2.99.* Comprehensive coverage of the vocabulary required by the new examination syllabuses.

* **The French Experience. Part 2**. Mike Garnier and Jeanine Picard. Course consultant: Anny King. *BBC Books. 1996.*

Course book	*ISBN 0563 40020 X*	*£14.99*
Cassette pack 1	*ISBN 0563 40025 0*	*£14.99*
Cassette pack 2	*ISBN 0563 40030 7*	*£14.99*

For further information, contact Tony Hammond, BBC Worldwide Languages, Room A2096, Woodlands, 80, Wood Lane, London W12 0TT. Tel: 0181 576 2411, Fax: 0181 576 3584.

* **Hotel Europa France.** Martyn Bird and Hélène Lewis. *Hodder and Stoughton. Second edition 1996.* Post-beginners' Business French.

Student's book	*ISBN 0 340 65497 X*	*£10.99*
Support book and Cassette pack	*ISBN 0 340 65498 8*	*£27.00*

Vian: L'Écume des jours. David Meakin. *Glasgow Introductory Guides to French Literature, number 38. 1996. ISBN 0 85261 528 0. £3.95.* For further information, write to the University of Glasgow French and German Publications, Modern Languages Building, the University, Glasgow G12 8QL.

* **La France aux Cent Visages.** Annie Monnerie. *Hatier/Didier. ISBN 9 782278 04377 4. No price given. 1996.* Material suitable for Advanced students.

* **Collins French Ringbinder Dictionary.** *Harper Collins. 1996. ISBN 0 00 470982 9. £4.99.* A new English/French, French/English dictionary, designed to fit into a standard A4 ringbinder.

* **French Activities for Clarisworks TM.** Kate Corney. *Collins Educational. 1996. PC version, ISBN 0 00 320184 8. Mac version, ISBN 0 00 320183 X. £29.99.* Designed to introduce IT into language lessons. The demonstration disks sent for review contain only a small selection of the activities available on the full product.

* **Envol.** Danièle Bourdais, Sue Finnie and Anna Lise Gordon. *Oxford. 1996. Student's book. ISBN 0 19 912206 7. £9.50.* There are other components, but not sent for review. **Envol** represents a new option for motivated learners of French and may be used in two ways: as a self-contained course for 14–16 year olds offering a stimulating direct route to the higher levels of GCSE, or as the first stage in a 14–18 programme providing a firm foundation for further studies.

* **Francoscope à la Mode.** David Sprake, Hazel Rhymes and Stephanie White. *Oxford. 1996. Student's book ISBN 0 19 912234 2. £9.00.* There are other components, but not sent for review. This course has been written for the Southern Examining Group's Modular syllabus, although the content makes it suitable for use with other syllabuses. Covers all the KS 4 content.

* **Génial Part 2.** Tony Elston, Patricia McLagan and Julie Green. *Oxford. 1996.*

Student's book	*ISBN 0 19 912192 3*	*£6.00*
Workbook	*ISBN 0 19 912914 X*	*£1.60*
Teacher's book	*ISBN 0 19 912913 1*	*£18.50*
Cassettes (4 × C90)	*ISBN 0 19 840480 8*	*£50.00 + VAT*
Repromasters	*ISBN 0 19 912213 X*	*£30.00 (not for review)*

The second part of a course for beginners and to help demotivated students regain their enthusiasm for language learning.

* **Auto Examen B.** Principal author: Gwen Berwick. Project director: Mike Buckby. IT consultants: Sue Hewer and K. Townshend. Language consultants: Danièle Bourdais and Martine Pillette.

Student's book	*ISBN 0 00 320071 X*	*£7.00*
Teacher's resource book	*ISBN 0 00 320072 8*	*£21.95*
Revision workbook	*ISBN 0 00 320182 1*	*£2.50*
Cassettes	*ISBN 0 00 320073 6*	*£59.95 + VAT*
Resources and Assessment pack	*ISBN 0 00 320199 6*	*£49.50*

A continuation of **Auto Examen A** (reviewed June 1996), with added emphasis on higher level skills, dictionary skills and planned revision.

* **Le Journal de Delphine.** Monique Alcott. CUP. *ISBN 0 521 44979 0.*

* **Chère Lambert!.** Ann and Mary Swarbrick. CUP. *ISBN 0 521 44978 2.*

* **Ménéstel le Tout Puissant.** Marc Guiguin. CUP. *ISBN 0 521 44980 4.*

* **Marco Raconte 13 Histoires Vraies.** Marc Guiguin. CUP. *ISBN 0 521 44983 9.*

* **Aventure et Passion.** Ann Swarbrick, Mary Swarbrick, Francine Rigoni and Steven Fawkes. CUP. *ISBN 0 521 44982 0.*

* **Des Roses Blanches Pour Danielle.** Authors as above. *ISBN 0 521 44981 2. Prices not given.* A variety of readers from the CUP 'Série Rouge'.

* **Le Secret du Professeur Micron.** Dominique Renaud. *Clé International. 1990.*

* **Aventures Dans les Musées de Paris.** Dominique Renaud. *Clé International. 1990.*

* **Enquête sur un Bateau-Mouche.** Dominique Renaud. *Clé International. 1990.* Three readers suitable for students with one year of French. Available in this country from European Schoolbooks Limited, The Runnings, Cheltenham GL51 9PQ.

* **Les Français: Mentalités et Comportements.** Nelly Mauchamp. *Clé International. 1996. ISBN 2 090 33198 4.* Numerous articles, drawings and photographs from the press. Advanced level. (from European Schoolbooks)

* **Panorama de la Langue Française.** J. Girardet and J-M Cridlig. *Clé International. 1996.* A three-level course, suitable for adolescent and adult beginners.

	Catalogue number	
Cahier d'exercices 1	*008452*	*£4.95*
Fichier d'évaluation + cassette	*008460*	*£19.95*
Livre du professeur 1	*008459*	*£12.95*
Class cassettes	*008455*	*£57.00 +*
Student cassettes	*008458*	*£18.95 +*
Video cassette	*008456*	*NYP*
C-D Rom	*008457*	*NYP*
Level 2		
Livre de l'élève	*008461*	*£12.95*
Cahier d'exercices	*008462*	*NYP*
Fichier d'évaluation + cassette	*008469*	*NYP*
Livre du Professeur	*008463*	*NYP*
Class cassettes	*008465*	*NYP*
Student cassettes	*008464*	*NYP*
Student CDs	*008468*	*NYP*
Video cassette	*008466*	*NYP*
Level 3		
Livre de l'élève	*008471*	*NYP*

(from European Schoolbooks)

* **Le Robert et Nathan Conjugaison.** *Nathan. 1996. ISBN 2 09180330 8. £6.95. New edition.* (from European Schoolbooks)

* **Gaston.** M. A. Apicella and H. Challier. *ELI. 1996.* A three-level course for primary children.

	Catalogue number	
Level 1		
Pupil's book	*000467*	*£5.80*
Teacher's book	*000468*	*£8.95*
Audio cassettes	*000469*	*£13.95 + VAT*
Level 2		
Pupil's book	*000750*	*£5.95*
Teacher's book	*000751*	*£8.95*
Audio cassettes	*000752*	*£13.95 + VAT*
Level 3		
Pupil's book	*000755*	*£5.95*
Teacher's book	*000756*	*£8.95*
Audio cassettes	*000757*	*£13.95 + VAT*
Flip-posters	*000759*	*£26.95 + VAT*

A selection of the above items have been sent for review. (from European Schoolbooks)

* **Je Lis et J'Écris.** *Hatier. 1996. Catalogue number 000339. Price £6.55.* Role-play and mixed skills for primary 5–7. (from European Schoolbooks)

* **Rendez-vous à l'Annexe.** B. Job, R. Gomes and A. Gruneberg. *Clé International. 1996.*

	Catalogue number	
Level 1		
Livre de l'élève	*008830*	*£8.50*
Video	*008833*	*£67.00 + VAT*

Other components and levels, but not all available for review. A video course for Secondary 13+ beginners. (from European Schoolbooks)

* **Grammaire Progressive du Français.** M. Grégoire and O. Thiévenaz. *Clé International. 1995.* Catalogue number *004888. £12.75.* Aimed specifically at students of French as a foreign language. With exercises. (from European Schoolbooks)

* **Exerçons-nous.** *Hatchette.* Designed for adolescent and adult learners, this series aims to consolidate their understanding and use of grammar. Some components of this very detailed course have been rewritten. Sent for review are two books:

	Catalogue number	
350 Exercices niveau débutants	*003106*	*£9.50*
350 Exercices niveau moyen	*003066*	*£9.50*

(from European Schoolbooks)
The catalogue numbers for the above books all refer to the European Schoolbooks catalogue.

* **BBC French Grammar.** Isabelle Fournier. Consultant: Duncan Sidwell. *BBC Language Unit 1995. ISBN 0 563 39941 4. £5.99.* Beginner level, to GCSE and beyond.

* **Action Grammaire.** Phil Turk and Geneviève Garcia Vandaele. *Hodder and Stoughton 1996. ISBN 0 340 63166 X.* Support for those aiming at the higher levels of GCSE and 'A level'.

* **Francophone Literatures.** Belinda Jack. *Oxford University Press 1996. ISBN 0 19 871506 4. £13.99 (paperback).* Texts in French from the numerous French-speaking areas around the world, including Africa, French Canada, the Creole Islands and Europe.

* **Camarades. Stage 1 (Year 1).** Michele Deane, Kathy Nourse, Gill Ramage and John Connor. *MGP. 1996.* This is a new French course, in four stages, designed to meet the needs of wide-ability classes and incorporating at each stage the Areas of Experience as stipulated in the new Curriculum.

Pupil's book	*ISBN 0 7487 2337 4*	*£6.75*
Teacher's book	*ISBN 0 7487 2338 2*	*£19.99*
Resource file	*ISBN 0 7487 2339 0*	*£44.00*
Cassettes (5)	*ISBN 0 7487 2340 4*	*£49.99 +VAT*
Flashcards	*ISBN 0 7487 2341 2*	*£37.99 +VAT*

Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) published November 1996. Stage 2 (Year 8) and Stage 3 (Year 9) will be published Autumn 1997. For further information, contact Andrea Lane on 01242 228888.

* **Bravo! Practice and Revision for French GCSE.** Rod Hares and David Mort. *John Murray. 1996.* Practice for the new GCSE based on syllabuses introduced in 1996 and examined from 1998.

Pupil's book (single copy)	*ISBN 0 7195 7305 X*	*£4.99*
Pupil's book (pack of 5)	*ISBN 0 7195 7311 4*	*£22.50*
Teacher's book and cassette	*ISBN 0 7195 7307 6*	*£25.00 +VAT*

* **Revision for French GCSE.** Rod Hares and David Mort. *John Murray. 1996.* The same material as **Bravo!** above, but as a bookshop version with answers, together with the cassette. *ISBN 0 7195 7306 8 £13.99*

* **A Level Questions and Answers: French (with audio CD.)** Jill Duffy. *Letts Educational. 1996. ISBN 1 85758 480 5 £9.95* Contains revision summaries, questions with suggested answers, examiners' tips and mark schemes. Suitable for all examination boards.

* **French Listening and Speaking Level 1.** Assessing language units for NVQs and GNVQs. *Kite Educational Publishers. 1996.* Prices and ISBN are not given. Two files and a cassette.

* **French for Business.** Malcolm Bower and Lucette Barbarin. *Hodder and Stoughton. Fourth edition 1996.*

Student's book *ISBN 0 340 64822 8 £10.99*

The support material and cassettes will be available in December, price £20.00 +VAT Completely revised and updated, this is a self-contained course in business French, aimed at those who have reached GCSE or equivalent standard.

* **Pierre Corneille: Horace.** Translated by Alan Brownjohn. *Angel Books. 1996. ISBN 0 946162 57 3 £6.95.* Introduction and notes by David Clark. This translation was commissioned by Damned Poets Theatre Company for a production at the Lyric Theatre Studio in October 1996.

* **The French Directory 1997. The complete guide to learning French in France.** *Summersdale Publishers, in association with Europa Pages. 1996. ISBN 1 873475 73 X. £6.99.* For students intending to take a year out from their studies or for anyone interested in improving their French, this book contains details of language schools, correspondence courses in French language skills, internet sites, low cost accommodation, etc.

* **French for Hospitality and Catering.** Marie-France Noël and Vicky Davies. *Hodder and Stoughton Educational. 1996.*

Student's book	*ISBN 0 340 65827 4*	*£10.99*
Cassettes (2)	*ISBN 0 340 65829 0.*	*£18.00 +VAT*

This is a new, practical language course, designed specifically to cover the language needs of employees and students in the Hospitality and Catering sector. Suitable for optional GNVQ language units as well as Additional or NVQ language units at Level 2. There is a variety of authentic material provided by the industry in France and Belgium.

* **Very Simple French.** Marie-Luce Pugh. *Global Books Limited. 1996. ISBN 1 86034 007 5. £4.99.* For complete beginners who wish to communicate at a basic level, in everyday situations.

*** Cassell Guide to French Literature.** General Editor: Valerie Worth-Stylianou. *Cassell. 1996. ISBN 0 304 33204 6. £15.99, paperback.* There is also a hardback edition at £35.00. Provides a concise account of the major developments in literature in French from the Middle Ages to the present day, including international Francophone writing. Contributions from Colin Davis, Toby Garfitt, Angelica Goodden, Christina Howells, Belinda Jack and Karen Pratt.

*** Promoting Learner Autonomy in University Language Teaching.** Edited by Elspeth Broady and Marie-Madeleine Kenning. *ISBN 1 874016 55 0. £10.50.*

*** Teaching Grammar: Perspective in Higher Education.** Edited by Dulcie Engel and Florence Myles. *ISBN 1 874016 54 2. £10.50.*

*** Teaching Translation in Universities: Present and Future Perspectives.** Edited by Penelope Sewell and Ian Higgins. *ISBN 1 874016 56 9. £10.50.* Three handbooks from the series Current Issues in University Language Teaching, published jointly by AFLS and CILT, series editors James A. Coleman and Gabrielle Parker. The present series was conceived as a channel for disseminating research findings and good practice in language teaching and learning at university level.

*** Thematique Series 8**. Various authors. MGP 1996. *ISBN 00 0095 5391 6. £51.99 + VAT.* An annual subscription service for A-level or H-Grade French, comprising authentic documents from the press, radio, etc., activities in French, teacher's notes, cassette, answers and transcripts. Six topics are covered in the latest pack, three of which are updates from previous issues:

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Les jeunes démunis	(update of Les jeunes in Thématique 3)
Poitou-Charentes	(new)
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Reviews

A Tour De Rôle.
"des activités de communication orale a pratiquer en face à face" Patrick Blanche. *Clé International. ISBN 2 19 033395 4.*

As the name suggests, this book consists of a set of tasks – 30 sections in total – which aim to improve students' spoken French. Included within the one single book are gapfill pairwork tasks for student A and the corresponding tasks for student B. Students work either in pairs or teams to fill in the gaps. In the centre of the book are the teacher's notes (in French). These include a list of structures which the students need to complete each task – this is only intended as a starting point though. Also included are the instructions for the successful completion of each task and ideas for complementary work.

At first sight, A Tour De Rôle appears confusing as the sheets for student A start at one end and the book must be turned upside down to view the other 'B' sheets. Although this was was novel, I actually found that it made comparing the two unnecessarily complicated. Having the A and B sheets side by side would be easier both to understand and photocopy. My ideal layout would be a set of photocopiable masters with a separate teacher's guide.

On closer inspection, I found that the tasks are centred on functions of language rather than situations – which I think would be beneficial – (for example, describing, expressing opinions, accepting and refusing invitations) and that the material is varied and stimulating. Students too thought that talking about dinosaurs and Jean Le Monde fighting with crocodiles made a welcome change for talking about the past tense! As a result, they were quite motivated about completing the tasks without cheating. These are certainly a refreshing alternative to many 'gap fills'.

Students remarked at the good layout of the sheets but felt frustrated at the lack of pointers. It would be a good idea to have the language vital to a particular task at the top of each sheet, rather than in the teacher's section, so that students may be more independent. With these modifications (or even with some kind of pointers from the teacher), A Tour De Rôle would be excellent for Key Stage 4, where we often have to re-introduce and revise language in different and more adult ways. As it stands, it is an excellent aid to easing the transition from GCSE to 'A' level and encouraging reluctant 6th formers to speak – I am looking forward to using it in September!

REGINA HAGUE
Hinchingbrooke School Huntingdon.

Maxilire. Series editor: Marie-Therese Bougard. *Longman. March 1996. ISBN 0 582 27692 6. £47.50 + VAT.*

Maxilire is a set of twenty readers, with materials at three different levels, aimed at Key Stage 3 low ability students. The stories have been written in a variety of styles and topics, including both fiction (detective, mystery, science fiction, ghost stories, humour, teenage concerns) and non-fiction (I particularly liked the fact that non-fiction books are included). Each book has at lease one activity (usually at the end). A teacher's support book with photocopiable worksheets and suggestions for classroom use accompanies the series.

The main emphasis is on reading for enjoyment and the bright, eye-catching, modern illustrations play a vital role in this. My students all thought the books looked really fun to read. They also thought the short vocabulary lists at the bottom of each page were an excellent idea. This made the level of story manageable but still challenging, as new language was being encountered. As most activities at the end of each book rely on the visual stimuli and require minimum writing, and the correct answers are printed on the inside cover, students were very motivated in completing the tasks. They enjoyed being independent and didn't tend to cheat!

The teacher's book contains some good ideas for using the series, including activities centred on vocabulary building, prediction, comprehension and listening. It also gives ideas for a quiz when a few students have read the same non-fiction book. As each student (or pair) reads a different book at the same time though, most activities – especially prediction work – would have to be completed in small groups rather than as a class.

Although the series is aimed at low ability students, I would use the books without hesitation for any teenage beginners in French – both my demanding year 9 high ability students and very weak year 7 group loved them. The books first caught my eye at the ALL Conference in Exeter and I've been itching to get some since! Every languages department should have them! However, the provision of 20 readers does seem strange as most classes are approximately 30 – so, too many for a half set, too few for a whole class. Maybe I'm being naive – for a class of 40, they are ideal!

The favourites seemed to be: Insectophobie, Eureka, Je n'ai pas peur, moi . . . , une vie de chat and La pêche and when asked what they thought, replies included: 'sweet', 'right level', 'funny' and 'très super'?! Personally, I thought they were excellent – thank you!

REGINA HAGUE
Hinchingbrooke School, Huntingdon.

OK! Stage Two. *OK! Stage Two Evaluation Pack £6.60. Pupil's Workbooks 1–6 (1 copy each) £6.60. Teacher's Resources, 0 7487 1944 X £70.00 . Cassettes (3 × C40), 0 7487 1945 8, £45.00. Kara-OK! Song cassette, 0 7487 2564 4, £16.50.*

Being enthusiastic users of the MGP OK! course with our low ability SEN pupils, we were delighted when Stage Two made its belated appearance earlier this year.

Stage Two covers Levels 2–4 of the National Curriculum and consists of 6 pupil's workbooks covering Fashion, Family and Friends, Pocket money, Going out and Holidays. The teacher's file of support materials is sufficiently clear to enable a non-specialist teacher to cover the material. This is important because the course can be used with children of primary school age as well as with SEN groups of older pupils. The file includes visuals to accompany the course. We find these very user friendly and adaptable and particularly useful as OHTs. We miss the fabulous flashcards from Stage One but find these visuals go a long way towards filling the gap.

The songs are one of the most popular elements of the course. They really are exceptional at Stage One and continue to be so in Stage Two. The song cassette is amusingly called Kara-OK! and has 12 songs on one side and on the other they are repeated with the words missing for classroom karaoke sessions!

At the end of each booklet there is a glossary of all the words and phrases encountered in the booklet which helps the pupils in their efforts to revise for themselves. There is an assessment test in each of the skill areas at the end of each booklet. The tasks are in ascending levels of difficulty and are within the capabilities of all. We use them as a formal end of unit test with the whole class but they could just as easily be administered on an individual basis as pupils feel that they are ready for them.

OK! is a course which enables low ability pupils to experience success, enjoyment and a much needed boost to their confidence. We use the songs and other elements of the course with other classes who will invariably comment on how good it

was. It has filled a gap in our provision and we, and our pupils, find it to be a pleasure to use.
PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton.

Route Nationale Book Four. *Student's Book Four, 0 17 439827 1, £8.25. Teacher's Resource File, 0 17 439828 X, £17.95. Copymasters 4, 0 17 439829 8, £50.00. Cassette A, 0 17 439830 1, £15.95. Cassette B, 0 17 439831 X, £15.95. Cassette C, 0 17 439832 8, £15.95. Cassette D, 0 17 439833 6, £15.95. Activity Box 4, 0 17 439834 4, £67.50. Video Cassettes, 0 17 439835 2, £99.95. Teacher's Notes, 0 17 439838 7, £5.95.*

Book Four forms the final stage of Nelson's Route Nationale National Curriculum course. It is designed to be used over the two years of KS4. The format of the book will be familiar to users of the course so far and the approach is similar. There are the three differentiated pathways to follow, with provision for independent learning and a wide range of authentic materials and activities for those travelling along the different routes.

There are twelve units of work provided which cover the required Areas of Experience and Programmes of Study. The differentiated Entrée Libre pages have been expanded to increase the opportunities for individual work and there is further such work from the associated Copymasters. The Activity Box offers yet more individualised differentiated work. The Vu et Lu pages continue to provide reading practice, as does the cartoon character Alphonse and a photostory runs throughout the book which will catch the interest of teenage pupils. There is a set of videos with teacher's notes which accompany the book and reinforce the material in each unit.

Two new elements caught both my eye and my interest. The first is that each unit in the book has a Pas Vrai! page of activities which include short items of interest to the pupils: quizzes, rhymes, riddles and jokes. The second is a series of copymasters called A Faire Chez Toi which provide regular opportunities for written work to be done at home. Songs and poems continue to be a feature of the book with authentic pop, rock, jazz and ballad for linguistic exploitation as well as enjoyment.

Book Four brings Route Nationale to a highly satisfactory conclusion as there can be little doubt that pupils who have made the journey along Nelson's recommended route will be very well prepared for the new style GCSE examination.
PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton.

Mauriac's Le Noeud de Vipères. K. M. McKilligan. *Grant and Cutler Critical Guides to French Texts, 1996. ISBN 0 7293 0358 6;* **Djian's 37°2 Le Matin**. David Platten. *Glasgow University, 1995. ISBN 0 85261 368 7;* **Aymé's Uranus and La Tête des autres.** by Christopher Lloyd, *Glasgow University, 1994. ISBN 0 85261 445 4;* **Sagan's Bonjour Tristesse** *by* Heather Lloyd, *Glasgow University, 1995, ISBN 0 85261 469 1. Prices not given.*

In his *Memoires Intimes,* Mauriac wrote that any work which survives is an open wound, through which readers bleed. One only has to look at the picture of the author used as frontispiece for Harraps edition of *Le Noeud de Vipères* to conclude that here is a difficult, a harsh, an unapproachable author and, indeed, readers of that text, or *Génitrix* or *Thérèse Desqueyroux* will be familiar with a pessimistic, fatalistic reading of life. In her new study of *Le Noeud de Vipères,* produced for Grant and Cutler, Kathleen McKilligan does not deny the dark side of Mauriac's best-known novel, but puts it in its Christian and, indeed, humanist context; 'fleeting moments of happiness, unity with nature, oneness with creation . . . [are] the very essence of man's experience in the world'.

This is a businesslike and scholarly study. Dr. McKilligan rightly centres our reading on the main character, Louis, and sensibly points out that sympathy for this inherently unsympathetic character is inevitable, since he tells the tale. But (as with Thérèse Desqueyroux) the reader must not be blind to faults and sins, and this study weighs up both. We then move out, to the physical setting, then the metaphorical setting, and it is here that the study takes off. It is rewarding, for example, to be prompted towards consideration of the military imagery, and the animal imagery, although not a new idea is well treated. All in all, this is an excellent guide.

Glasgow University Press are well on the way to capturing the critical high ground once exclusively the domain of Grant and Cutler. Specifically targetting mainly modern texts, they have now published guides to *Bonjour Tristesse, Uranus/La Têtes des autres* and *37°2 Le Matin*. In the case of the two latter texts there is little critical material extant, and the two studies here make a good start. David Platten, writing about Djian's novel, deals (as he must) with the film Betty Blue, probably better known than the book on which it is based. He proves to be a brisk and no-nonsense film critic; he tells us about feminist and psychoanalytical schools of criticism (no need to get worried: the one says that women are exploited in this and other films; the other that what is now called le look in film terms merely encourages, in an unfortunate phrase, audience participation) and gives a brisk conclusion: 'don't get hung up about sex: it's only natural; enjoy it!' His reading of the novel is likewise scholarly and informed, but imbued with common sense.

Chris Lloyd also has a film to deal with (*Uranus*). Much has been written on Occupation/Resistance literature, and this book is as good an introduction to it as any. Aymé was a problematic character (collaborator or not?), and his novels and plays (one of each here) reflect this ambiguity. Dr Lloyd defends Aymé stoutly, and his analysis is crisp and to-the-point.

Bonjour Tristesse is a very different kettle of fish. This novel, a somewhat faded classic, some might feel, has enjoyed a renaissance on A Level boards' lists and will always be required reading for students of twentieth century literature. Heather Lloyd sensibly does not discuss the novel character by character, or theme by theme, but as a whole, treating us to what is almost an extended commentary. To one who has never liked the text, her commentary was interesting enough to initiate a re-reading (and I realised what a good text is). Unlike her fellow critics, Heather Lloyd leaves the last word to the disarmingly honest author herself: ***Bonjour Tristesse*** *is a well written story, that's all!*

CHRIS RAMSEY
Wellington College.

Néothèque. Sue Hewer. *Collins Educational. ISBN 0 00 320148 1. £99.00.*

At first glance, *Néothèque* appears a curiously ill-assorted collection of books and pamphlets of various shapes, sizes and textures, and with no apparent order. This impression is soon dispelled, however, upon closer inspection and what emerges is a refreshing and novel set of readers which should prove stimulating for 11–14 year old learners of French.

The scheme operates on three levels. Niveau 1 consists of 15 A4 photocopiable worksheets that draw on recent reading research to develop explicitly reading skills and language awareness as related to the skill of reading. This student-centred approach is continued in the worksheets that accompany the 18 books that make up Niveaux 2 and 3 (9 books at each level, with 2 copies of each in each pack). Typically, the worksheets consist of a short summary of the text in French, a pre-reading vocabulary activity and post-reading activities where instructions are given, and a response required, in the target language. Each student should receive his/her copy of a reading Profile, on which he/she is encouraged to record pages read, not books. Students are thus not obliged to read from cover to cover, and re-reading is encouraged. Prominence is given to 'real' reading and one of the suggestions made is that when the whole class is reading, the teacher too should have a French book to hand.

The emphasis on recording pages read reflects the nature of some of the books in this collection, which includes non-fiction and poetry – a selection of poems about feelings, for example, and a short history of Napoleon. Several of the stories and poems introduce students to French-speaking countries outside Europe, and are rich in multi-cultural and cross-curricular material. Although re-printed in a special edition for this collection, all the books that comprise *Néothèque* were originally published in French-speaking countries, and as such have a freshness not shared by artificially contrived readers. Glossaries, while they have their place on the accompanying worksheets, are absent from the texts, which can be read as authentic texts.

Néothèque attaches importance to developing reading skills and is not a pack for those slack lessons when everyone is too tired to do anything else but sit in front of a book – it is a structured scheme requiring active involvement. Teachers and students alike will find it stimulating and thought-provoking, and it can be thoroughly recommended for the lower secondary school.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts.

Triangle 13. Subject Learning and Teaching in a Foreign Language. Authors: Various. *Didier Érudition: 6, rue de la Sorbonne, 75005 Paris. ISBN 2 86460 237 7. 130FF.*

To some extent, the cross-curricular imperatives which we were all expected to demonstrate in our departmental documents and schemes of work seem to have receded. That there might, after all, exist subject boundaries is no longer a taboo idea; indeed, I have heard (from an authoritative source not a million miles from the Teacher Training Agency) that teacher trainers are now wondering how best to help primary teachers deliver academically-rigorous subject-based lessons.

That said, more and more schools (shamefully, more in mainland Europe than in Britain, it seems) are now looking at the possibility of teaching certain subjects, principally History, Geography or Science, through the medium of a foreign language. (Here at Northbourne Park, we have for some years been doing it ourselves, teaching Geography through French.)

This book, published jointly by the *Goethe-Institut*, the British Council and *CREDIF-École Normale Supérieure de Fontenay/Saint-Cloud*, seems to be an *omnium gatherum* of the printed papers from a colloquium. (Where was it held? Why wasn't I told?) The various articles are printed in English, French or German, according to their language of origin, but in all cases there is an initial summary in the three languages. I can read only French and English and despite (therefore) being unable to read four of the nine papers – which are printed in German – found plenty to interest me.

For a collection of academic papers, this is a remarkably helpful, readable and user-friendly book, full of really practical advice and suggestions. Apart from anything else, it gives a number of names and addresses, sources of information on this area which seems at present to be woefully under-documented.

If you are contemplating setting up some sort of *section bilingue* in your school, do, please, consult this book. I commend it to you.

ANDREW DAVIS
Northbourne Park, near Deal, Kent.

French Culture at the Liberation 1944–1947. Michael Kelly and Rosemary Bock. *University of Southampton. 1996. CD-ROM. £37.60.*

This CD-ROM contains a substantial database of information about France's cultural landscape in the three years around the Liberation. The information takes the form of text and still pictures – there is no video, and only one rather isolated soundtrack – and is accessible from standard database forms based on seven categories: Books, Articles, Films, Images, Plays and Events. Different categories can be queried and handily cross-referenced – so, for instance, entering the keywords *woman* and *resistance* directs the learner to, amongst others, the 1945 film *Le Silence de la Mer*, de Beauvoir's novel *Le Sang des Autres*. (The database is neither case-sensitive nor 'intelligent', so the query also brings up a photograph of a female collaborator resisting popular justice during the *Epuration*.)

Possibly the most impressive feature of the package is the library of 196 high-quality contemporary photographs, which powerfully convey the mood and turmoil of post-war France. Students at all levels are more likely to contemplate and retain the pictures of the shorn *'collaboratrices'* and the peoples' courts that tried them, than any brief textual description. The database technology enables these *images* to be sorted or retrieved in line with the chosen themes or keywords.

This CD-ROM is essentially a supplementary resource, to consolidate this area of study. It is a database resource rather than an interactive learning package, and lends itself to private study for an individual student's enquiry. While copyright law has clearly restricted the range of materials, this is nonetheless a useful resource which encourages initiative and autonomy in any examination student (from GCSE to undergraduate level).

The database runs slowly off the CD, requiring *Microsoft Windows* and 800 × 600 screen resolution.

NATALIE SEEVE-McKENNA
Department of Education,
University of Liverpool

Around and About Paris. Thirza Valois. *Volume One: the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th arrondissements (1995) 310 pp. Volume Two: the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th arrondissements (1996) 228 pp. Volume 3 (not yet published) will cover the 13th to the 20th arrondissements. Iliad Books, 5 Nevern Road, London SW5 9PG. Volume 1 ISBN 0 9525378 0 X, £12.95. Volume 2 ISBN 0 9525378 1 8. £12.95.*

For years I have been a collector of travel books and have amassed amongst other works a substantial collection of the renowned Baedeker Guides published in Leipzig and London from the eighteen fifties up to 1939 or so. The name Baedeker continues to appear on travel books to this day but recent publications bearing the name cannot hold a candle to the originals. Until quite recently I have thought there was nothing to equal Baedeker, however dated the guides may be. Indeed that is part of their charm. The *Guides Bleus* are thorough and often thoroughly boring. The *Guides Michelin* are attractive and handy for the quick tour but lack the detail that a more prolonged stay might need.

However these new guides to Paris (of which 2 volumes have now appeared) have all the virtues of the best Baedekers plus a modern lively approach that makes them extremely readable. The technique adopted allows the reader to walk through Paris, arrondissement by arrondissement and, with its clear narrative style, it gives a *roman à fleuve* feeling to the whole work. And it is a fascinating work, convenient to refer to (I like the highlighting of all street names adopted for Volume 2). It can be read from cover to cover or dipped into like an encyclopaedia. (There is a very comprehensive index which allows such dipping with ease.)

The author, Thirza Vallois, who studied at the Sorbonne, is not a native of Paris but she has lived here for over 30 years. It shows. Elle connaît Paris comme sa poche. And so do most taxi drivers, I imagine, and perhaps too, many other Parisians, but few will have the depth of knowledge of historical and present day Paris such as that possessed by the author of this guide. In addition to an encyclopaedic knowledge of minutiae of Paris day by day Thirza Vallois reveals a lively manner and a delightful style. She is a good read. Entertaining at all times and full of erudition and historical anecdote she out-Baedekers Baedeker even at his best. Baedeker of course included comments on hotels and restaurants and often made recommendations. This is **not** the purpose of Thirza Vallois' book. It is aimed at the serious visitor keen to absorb the history and culture of Paris. It dispels many myths and clichés about Paris. It is not for the 'If this is Tuesday it must be Paris' tourist. It is for the visitor **on foot** with time to stand and stare, not for the casual sightseer flying by in his panoramic coach.

In the context of a school these books will be seen as excellent reference books for students engaged in projects on Paris or on detailed aspects of Paris. There is much to comment on the economic significance of

Paris and on its historic role as a capital.

If I have to carp a little and compare these books with other guides, I have to say I am not highly impressed by the maps and street plans included (a Baedeker strong point!). They are called *réalisations cartographiques* and though done by a variety of hands they are all equally off-putting. Schematic, sketchy and sometimes over-simplified they are occasionally difficult to decipher and don't do justice to the detailed and carefully presented text nor even to the usually successful pen and ink drawings of buildings and other sites.

That apart, the books can be highly recommended. So refreshingly different from the multitude of coffee table books on Paris, with arty photos and little hard information. These are books for the real lovers of Paris. They are books to read and follow *sur place* and they are books to think oneself into Paris when in Barnsley on a foggy night. I hope someone buys them for me for Christmas and I look forward with impatience to seeing Volume 3 (13th to 20 arrondissements).

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

French Pronuciation Tutor for Windows and Macintosh. *CD ROM. Hyperglot Software Company, P.O. Box 10746, Knoxville, Tennessee. Price not stated.*

Interactive CD ROMS are coming onto the market rapidly now and pronunciation is an obvious area to concentrate on as sound and vision can be effectively combined. Close ups of the human mouth actually producing the sounds of *grenouille* must be helpful to the serious student who hears and lip reads at the same time. In addition the student can record his/her own version of these sounds and compare the result with that of the native speaker.

This CD ROM is usable at almost any level. It starts by introducing the alphabet and deals with the pronunciation of each letter in turn. It then goes on to introduce practice with letter/sound combinations, especially helpful for anglophones struggling with *tr* and *dr* and the tricky word *dru*.

Each screen contains a list of typical words showing how the sound is represented. In addition there is an inset of the mouth and you can see the lips moving. Side by side with this there is the usual phonetics textbook section of the head which diagrammatically shows the speech organs in motion.

This is not an all or nothing disk. You don't simply start at the beginning and work through to the end. It is well structured and students can pick what they particularly want to concentrate on by using the Topics Screen – Plain Vowels, Nasal Vowels, Consonants, Word Linking and Liaison and Word Pairs. In addition there are some useful vocabulary sections covering telling the time and numbers. Scores appear on screen when a student has attempted a test. A level students will benefit from these exercises as much as younger learners. Indeed since a fair degree of motivation is needed to maintain interest in such a solitary pastime it is probable that A level candidates will get the most use out of this disk.

The student has full control of the program. By clicking on the appropriate button the student chooses to listen or record. Where vocabulary is involved the user can either keep the English equivalents on screen or click on 'HIDE ENGLISH', thus causing the selected words or sentences to vanish from the screen. The same system applies to on-screen French words.

The disk comes with a comprehensive instruction booklet of some 50 pages. This gives very clear instructions on how to install the CD ROM on a PC or Macintosh. There then follows quite a lengthy section which clearly explains how to use the Control Bar, including how to record and how to control the volume. Very little instruction will be needed for anyone familiar with interactive screens. Those who are unfamiliar with such screens will very quickly get the hang of it. All instructions are on screen and controlling the different elements is simplicity itself. The disk is very recommendable. All you really need is motivation. Unfortunately the CD ROM will not answer the wearisome Friday afternoon question 'Are you forced to, Miss?' 'Do you have to?'

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

FuturePerfect. FrenchVerb. Version 1.0.0 for Windows. Conjugates and deconjugates over 10,000 French verbs. *FuturePerfect Software Ltd., Simonart House, 130 Hackney Road, London E2 7QL. Price not supplied.*

How's your French vocabulary? Pretty extensive? No problems about getting your Year 11 through GCSE in May? Well 'Please Sir, what does *abat-carrer*[1] mean? or *absterger*[2]? or *écabocher*[3]? or *zyeuter*[4]? or *zinzoliner*[5]? or *zinzinuler*[6]? or *zader*[7]?' or any one of thousands of other verbs you might meet once a Sheffield flood. So you want to know the Present Subjunctive as well? Easy PC. Equip yourself with the floppy disk (not CD ROM) *FuturPerfect FrenchVerb* and you're away. All you need is a spare 8 mb of RAM and you and your GCSE or A level groups can click away to your heart's content. Thanks to the concept thought up by Stephen [illegible] and Brendan Morgan and the program produced by Charles Langley and Bliss Healey you can have all these verbs at your fingertips. Talk about *épater le bourgeois*, your students will slay the A level oral examiners. With all these and many more – *s'abalourdir*[8], *s'abâtardir*[9], *abroutir*[10], *abrutir*[11], *écaffer*[12], *yoyoter*[13], *wobbuler*[14], all you do is find the menu, click on *FrenchVerb*, then click on *Conjugate*, then click on the Mood you want, then click on the tense, then click on Singular or Plural, then on 1st, 2nd or 3rd person. *Et voilà. Robert est ton oncle* – as my old French teacher used to say. *Il mange le pisse-en-lit par les racines depuis un moment* and I bet he's spinning pretty fast at the thought of this white hot technology now at our disposal.

It's an electronic Becherelle but it was easier to turn old fashioned pages and as far as word frequency goes I seem to remember that you might one day have envisaged using some of the verbs Becherelle contained, even if *seoir* was set out in all persons, tenses and moods. This electronic version has to be plugged in, booted up and chased all around the screen with a mouse. Very impressive.

The program has one further innovative feature. It deconjugates. Got you there? Well supposing in your wide reading you have come across *'il faut que tu absterges. . .'* all you need to do is type in the verb, having first selected from the menu **Deconjugate**, and it will inform you in no time that you have stumbled upon the 2nd person singular of the present subjunctive of *absterger* meaning *to absterge*. For the ignorant amongst us it does add that a synonym for to *absterge* is to *cleanse*. I must confess I'm really into computers and interesting software, but I think I'll be giving this one a miss, despite the huge amount of research that must have gone into it. How about you?

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

Notes

1. Not in Collins-Robert nor Larousse. = to cut away the sharp edges of a strip of leather.
2. Not in C-R or L. = to absterge to cleanse (Chambers gives 'to purge').
3. Not in C-R or L. = to strip tobacco leaves.
4. Not in C-R or L. but is in Hérail and Lovatt, = to take a butcher's at, to stare at.
5. Not in C-R. L. gives *zinzolin* = couleur rouge violacé tirée de la semence du sesame.
6. Not in C-R or L. = to sing (of warblers and tits).
7. Not in C-R or L. = to make a region a future development zone.
8. Not in C-R or L. = to grow dull, slow witted.
9. In C-R. = to degenerate, to become debased.
10. Not in C-R or L. = to nibble at, to crop your shoots.
11. = to exhaust.
12. Not in C-R or L. = to prepare a willow twig for weaving.
13. Not in C-R or L. = to play with a yoyo.
14. Not in C-R or L. = to wobbulate (not in Chambers or Concise Oxford).

Télématique et Didactique des Langues Projet Lingua VB 1995 (ref. 94-03/1636/F-VB). *Published by the F.I.P.F. Details from the ALL Office, Rugby.*

I cannot for the life of me think why we have not heard much much more of this publication. Why hasn't it been advertised? It should be for it has a lot of ideas to stimulate teachers of French who are always on the lookout for new materials and methods. Is it perhaps lost, strangled at birth in its own bureaucracy? Look at its reference number above, and yet it appears to have no ISBN and no page numbers! I had to count the pages – approximately 120.

Do such things matter? Well yes, they do matter as this generally well laid out and well printed book risks being overlooked. Masses of work and much imagination has been put into it by the Danish, Belgian, Greek and British project leaders involved, not to mention all their pupils' contributions.

As the title indicates the main centre of interest in the project, originally reported on in *Francophonie*, is e-mail between pupils in four E.U. countries for whom the lingua franca was French. The British arm, led by Kate Townshend, was supported by ALL. Written in very readable French, unmarred by airy-fairy abstractions such as those which sometimes characterise this kind of work, the book sets out to be a practical guide to conducting e-mail between schools – *la télématique dans la classe*. It gives solid advice on how to launch such a project, designing appropriate questionnaires for pupils to work to and suggests working methods.

It then goes on to develop themes which lend themselves to this sort of exercise: *stéréotypes nationaux et internationaux, proverbes, un mythe ou une légende de votre pays, les sports, un problème social* etc. Pupils in each participating country expressed their thoughts on these themes and asked questions of the others. Lots of pupils were involved and most were limited to approximately 2 hours of French a week in a crowded timetable.

This was perhaps one of the advantages of the project. All correspondents started off equally. It was not a matter of mother tongue user being streets ahead of foreign learners. For all the participants it was expression in *français langue étrangère*. Doubtless this involved extensive behind the scenes work on the part of class teachers. It if did it was worth it for the many examples provided reveal a high level of well controlled French expressing obviously adolescent thoughts. The messages appear to be completely genuine, entirely the work of the pupils involved, i.e. teachers do not appear to have fed ideas to pupils. They are the result of class discussion perhaps.

How can we know this? Simply by going through parts of the 4 accompanying HD floppy disks. Some 8 megabytes of material is provided for use on the PC. Note that details on how to get into the disks are not provided until you get to *Annexe 7* on the last page but one of the book! Each disk label should give the information. Once into the disks a wealth of teaching and learning material is released. Perhaps the most interesting of the 4 disks is No. 4 *Les contributions des élèves*. Here we have extensive examples of messages which flowed between the participating schools. The great thing is that the language is simple. It's written by other learners and it hammers home just how much you can actually say with limited vocabulary and structure. Our students could learn an enormous amount from studying these messages.

And it is not just a question of learning French, for the themes chosen give rise to opportunities for self expression which permit readers to begin to understand the thinking of other Community nationals. The section on national stereotypes is a superb example of this in action. *Je pense que les Italiens sont très passionnés et animés . . . Les jeunes gens sont très soignés, parfumés et portent, par exemple des chemises en soie rose et aussi des bijoux d'or. Mais les vieux messieurs et les jeunes gens possèdent une qualité en commun, parce que toutes les générations sifflent et clignent de l'oeil sur les jeunes filles du Danemark.* And a Greek pupil writing frankly on the English says: *L'Anglais est très conservateur et s'intéresse beaucoup à* *son travail, sa maison et ses loisirs. Il aime surtout son pays, il est assez chauvin, il considère son pays comme le meilleur du monde et il se croit le plus intelligent et le plus travailleur de l'Europe.* What a wealth of classroom work in these statements, language use (*chauvin, le meilleur du monde, il se croit* etc) and, perhaps more important, areas for discussion on the nature of prejudice. Unfortunately space does not permit more examples. They are fascinating reading and all potentially very useful at all levels in schools.

That is my last point. The project was designed to encourage the use of e-mail in language study. Superb, but what if you work in a school which, like many is without access to e-mail? Then there is still enormous potential in this material held on disk. The correspondence can be printed out on one home PC and a mass of genuine material on topics of interest is literally at your finger tips. It is there to use any way you want to and we really should be taking advantage of this rich vein.

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

French Grammar and Usage. Roger Hawkins and Richard Towell. *Arnold. 1996. ISBN 0 340 59142 0 (paperback), 0 34059143 9 (hardback), 425 pp. Price £16.99 (p.b.).*

This book is a major contribution to reference works on French grammar. It goes without saying that each generation needs to rewrite French grammar for native English speakers learning French. This is not simply because the language is in a perpetual state of change but also because the users, their background, their skills and their needs are constantly changing too. The authors of this new grammar have plainly taken this fact of life on board in planning their work. They have, for example, at the outset provided a "Glossary of key grammatical terms" – in English, for in recent years many of us have struggled to give grammatical explanations to students who are unsure of what a clause is or what characterises an intransitive verb. Without such basic understanding the student gains little from being told that intransitive verbs are conjugated with *être* in the Perfect Tense.

Let it be said straightaway that this is a very thorough review of French grammar, aimed at the A-level candidate and well beyond, into the university. Written by two widely experienced university teachers and examiners it aims to answer the questions which frequently perplex modern and reasonably advanced learners of French as a foreign language.

There are seventeen chapters each one being dedicated to a major grammatical heading (a grammatical phenomenon), roughly following the traditional parts of speech (nouns, adjectives etc.) but, where necessary, because of the complexity of the matter in hand, breaking the subject down into subsections, for example the verb is treated under seven specific headings = forms, constructions, agreement, tenses, infinitives etc. This facilitates enormously the task of the enquirer who seeks guidance on a particular aspect of verbs. Particularly striking is the extensive section on prepositions which, in my experience, are a major source of confusion and ignorance on the part of English mother tongue speakers. As a result, pages 305 to 330 are in themselves a major justification for buying this book. In every case the preposition under consideration is illustrated by short exempla immediately translated into English. Without exception, I believe, the examples are purpose built i.e. they are not wordy citations from literature to illustrate how a master craftsman uses a particular construction. They are all neat, uncluttered, straightforward examples in simple French.

This last point needs to be stressed for this is not intended to be a "learn French grammar through French" approach. It is unashamedly designed for English speakers who do *not* want to have to cope with the additional hurdle of fathoming out what the grammatical explanation actually means. There is a place for everything and the authors of this grammar are very successful in presenting French grammar for English users.

A few examples suffice to prove this. Chapter 2 covers Determiners and is largely devoted to articles. The section is presented in a crystal clear way. A series of headings and sub-headings guide the enquirer to the topic he/she is looking for – definite, indefinite, partitive, each subsection then being indicated in bold type to indicate different usages. Where specific items are notorious sources of error for English students this is clearly pointed out, e.g. *d'autres* and *des autres*. Similarly the sections on gender and number are first class. Clear in explanation, well laid out on the page, easy to find and easy to follow.

There is also an index of grammatical points and key French words. It is pretty detailed and does take the user to the right section. Once a student becomes used to using this book I wonder how often he will need to consult the index for, as I have indicated, the general layout of the book is very clear. In the process of reviewing this book I quickly familiarised myself with its structure. Nevertheless the index is so detailed that it enables the casual user to orientate himself quickly.

There is also a short bibliography, suggesting other works to consult for more specialist answers perhaps. Grevisse is listed here, for it must be stressed that this new work is not Grevisse, nor does it set out to be. Lovers of Grevisse will doubtless find omissions here and maybe even the odd inaccuracy for the sake of clarity for, as we know, Grevisse deals with the most recondite of grammatical topics and in so doing probably terrifies most English users. This book shouldn't terrify any serious student anxious to get a straight answer to a query. I like the forthright way it states the rule and gives the exceptions where there are any. It is not the *Dictionnaire des difficultés de la langue française* and it makes no attempt to go into many subtleties of the language. The student who appreciates such subtleties will be capable of consulting the appropriate reference work.

I have enjoyed browsing through this grammar and perhaps that is a further reason for buying it i.e. it has something for everyone. It is not simply a basic student manual by a long chalk. It could usefully find a place on every French teacher's bookshelves and most certainly should be on every university library shelf if not on every student reading list.

This last point requires me to stress that *French Grammar and Usage* is a reference book, not a class handbook. It contains no exercises of any kind and will not lend itself on its own to a progressive study. It will support grammar teaching brilliantly and if grammar is being taught it will be an excellent book to refer students to for reinforcement of points hammered at in class. There would be room for exercises in a supporting volume. If the authors were to devise a series of self-correcting exercises for floppy disk or CD-ROM I think they would have a winner.

ALBERT TOPAZE
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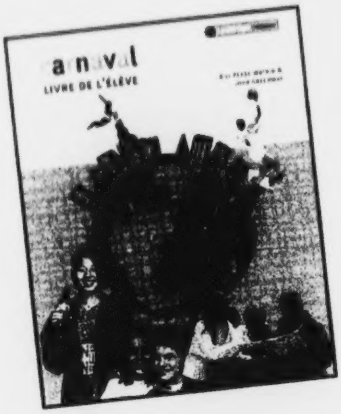

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Russian Day	21 June	London
KS4 issues and post-16	28 June	Chester
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Notes for contributors

Contributions

The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French.

Articles written in French are particularly welcome

Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

a) Articles of about 3000 words.
b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (longer reviews or articles may be accepted),

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation

Articles should be submitted either typewritten or on computer disk (plus hard copy)

a) Typewritten: Type with double spacing. Typewriters or word processors should be set at 44 characters (the equivalent of the line length), as this will help the Editor plan the arrangement of the journal. Please send two copies of the article and keep one for yourself. One copy of the article should be 'clean' (with no corrections) to enable the printer to scan it. If there are any changes or corrections these should be made on the second copy.
b) Disk: Send 3½" or 5¼" disks (NB not Amstrad Cf2 disks) in double, single or high density formats. Most word processing packages are acceptable but if you have any query contact the ALL office. Also send in one hard copy of the article with the disk, and keep one for yourself.

Give your article one short title (not a title and a subtitle), and divide it up with brief subheadings.

Give full references for all sources quoted. Journal policy is to put these at the end of the article and not at the bottom of the page.

Illustrations

Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing

In order to be considered for including in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by 1st February and 1st August. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

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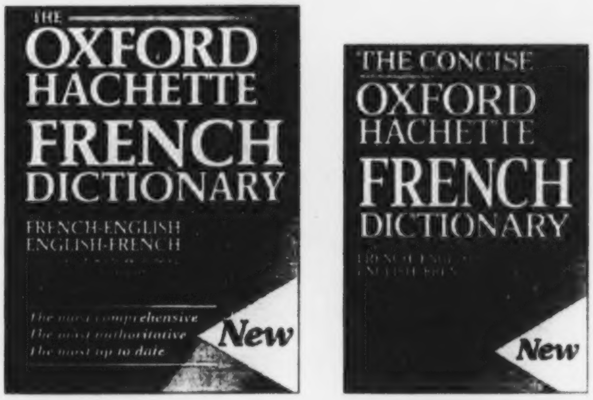
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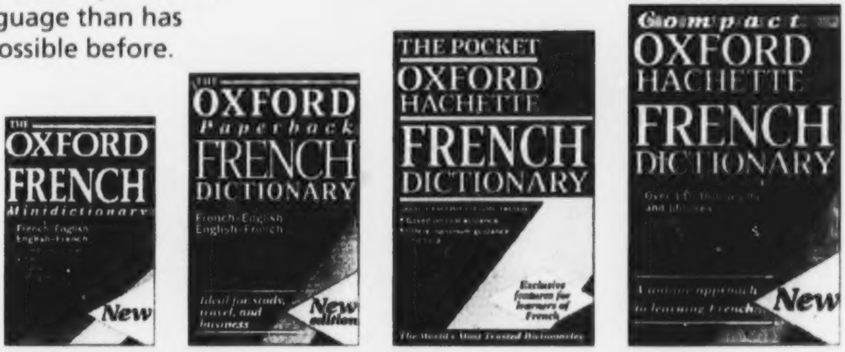
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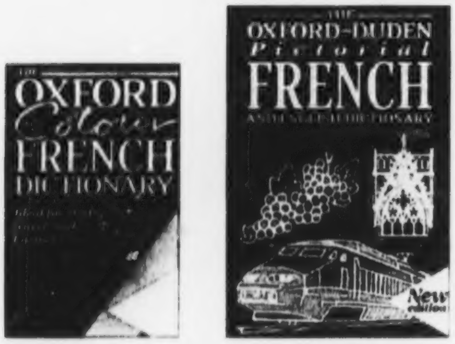
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December 1996 No. 14

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FRANCOPHONIE

The French Journal
of the
Association for Language Learning

Articles in this issue on French at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, together with 7 pages of new book reviews

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JUNE 1997
No 15

ASSOCIATION for
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FREE CLASSROOM RESOURCE MATERIALS

One of the reasons for changing over to an A4 format is to permit the inclusion in the journals of materials that can be used immediately for teaching purposes.

For this first edition in the new format we have included some sample pages from the ALL Classroom Resource series (available also in German, Italian and Spanish).

For future issues, readers are invited to send in pages of resource material (any level, any sector) which they are willing to share with colleagues. They must be in A4 format, typed / word processed, and free of any copyright restrictions (this includes graphics).

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Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 2

Editorial

"L'habit ne fait poinct le moyne" Rabelais astutely observed in 1534, give or take a few c's and y's, according to the edition you use. The English have an equally witty and perceptive remark. Something to do with the inadvisibility of judging books by their covers, or was it colours? If we did, works of the most extraordinary kind might wind up on the best sellers' lists and works of honest endeavour and devoted study, such as *Francophonie*, might pass by unnoticed.

I have to confess that on the occasions when I have discussed our journal with readers I have sometimes wondered whether a format along the lines of that adopted by *The Beano* might make more appeal to some. I readily agree that not all our members are waiting to get hold of the latest on the influence of French on Breton morphology and I would sympathise with any reader who questioned the relevance to present day teachers of French of an article entitled 'Pratique allégorique et problématique de la subjectivité dans *La Vision Christine*' – which, though returned to its author was, in fact, a most informative and well written article presenting a great source of information on the life of the fifteenth century poetess Christine de Pisan.

Yes, the Editor has borne in mind the interests and needs of his readers in the past, and an analysis of the contents of *Francophonie* published in December 1995 showed that from a total of 94 articles which had appeared in the first 12 issues, 41 had been classroom based in some way. So far as we know, this is exactly what readers are asking for.

So where is the problem? You asked for beans and you got beans. Or maybe you didn't ask for beans. Or was it perhaps the tin they were in and the label round the tin that put some readers off! One reader I met at *Language World* once told me he never read anything if it was longer than a page. "No time," he said. It made me wonder whether we ought to bring out an alternative edition "sur K7". Listen to it in the car or at your own convenience.

Discussion with and observation of readers has led me to believe that the A5 format with the formal Bible-like double column layout has caused a fair number of readers to stumble before reaching page 64. A frothier presentation is certainly worth trying. *Punch* has just got the message and henceforth the new *Francophonie* format of 40 pages will land in your lap twice a year. This new layout will enable us to offer scope for writers who have something important to say in an article of 3000 or so words and, at the same time, it leaves space for the one pager – a single point to make, expressing a view and passing on an idea. What is more, such a short piece will not take up your whole Summer Holiday to write it. Here is every reader's opportunity to make a telling contribution to teachers of French throughout the world, not just in the UK.

And what can you write about? Briefly, anything you think colleagues want to know about. And it does not have to be serious. "Laughter's the best medicine", as a rival publication proclaims. Drawings and photos are always welcome. Your adventures on the Internet. Any experience of classroom activities based on material derived from the Internet is welcome. This will be a prominent feature of the December issue. If nothing else, please express your views on what others have written.

For other ideas please see News – 'Contributions' on page 30. Show it to colleagues and consider a departmental contribution. Without your contributions there will be no journal. Oh what has become of Madame de Sévigné?

Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 3–6

BEd French course – developing students' curiosity

Beatrice Davies
Westminster College, Oxford

INTRODUCTION

In 1994, on the first day of the first multi-racial elections in South Africa, my son aged nine came home from his local primary school after an ordinary day. I wanted to hear how his teacher had dealt with a matter of such importance, and whether she had succeeded in conveying the emotion that no doubt she was feeling. It turned out that the day had come and gone without a word on the subject. I was doubly concerned by this, first as a parent: on this occasion I could rectify this surprising omission, but what about all the other issues which doubtless arose every day in the context of the school and were possibly never picked up? Secondly, and as importantly, I was concerned as a teacher trainer. It led me to reflect on our cohort of Modern Languages B.Ed students currently engaged in our four-year course. Would they after their graduation, in such a situation, talk to their pupils about the end of apartheid in South Africa? Would they see it as a relevant topic to bring to the classroom? More crucially, were they curious enough about the world to see the importance of absorbing and passing on such information to the children in their care? It occurred to me at this point that we probably tend to take for granted some degree of intellectual curiosity on their part when they reach us: with the growing importance of independent study, our teaching methods indeed require that they demonstrate initiative and interest if they are to succeed. But was it fair to expect 19 year-old students to be curious about the world, and if not, did *we* equip them to be curious? And is this not a more important aspect of teacher training than we tend to be aware of?

THE BEGINNING STUDENT

I am beginning to come to terms with the fact that our average 19 year old B.Ed student who comes to us fresh from school, having just achieved a B or a C grade at French, will be unsophisticated both linguistically and culturally, and that much will need to be done in this respect. It is, I suppose, extraordinary to witness the fact year after year that many of these students will reach us unaware of what an adjective is, or that France is governed by a President. In terms of language, Coleman's recent survey of British students (1996) shows a huge range of proficiency levels across British universities with average scores for first year French groups starting from 21%. But the problem is not so much ignorance as lack of curiosity. Most students do not come to us with the desire to know these things. In his research, Coleman shows that the desire for a career dominates in the decision of four out of five students opting to study another language, thus pointing to instrumental motivation on the part of the beginning student as opposed to a sincere interest in another culture and language. Looking back at my own student days and observing our clientèle over the years, it seems clear that the overwhelming majority of 19 year old students are not immediately receptive to what they are presented with. As they have by then opted for a narrow specialisation, I tend to take it for granted that they will automatically retain and process new knowledge simply because they will see how interesting and important it is. I also feel that they will have gained confidence from their successes at A level, and at having reached higher education in our selective British system, and that this self confidence will translate into some degree of intellectual autonomy, hence curiosity. The truth in many cases is that they enter higher education with much the same mentality as that with which they lived through seven years of secondary school: a necessary activity which is imposed on them and gives only space for a passive, receptive attitude. They in fact reach us with surprisingly little confidence in their ability and study skills, and are therefore in a state of considerable intellectual dependence.

"But was it fair to expect 19 year-old students to be curious about the world"

THE IMPORTANCE OF CURIOSITY

I have come to the conclusion that curiosity requires independence of thought, and as such it requires some knowledge and much confidence. It implies that one can make sufficient sense out of the world to want to know more, and more importantly will feel capable of doing so, of understanding more. It implies a feeling of personal worth, a feeling that one's own perception and understanding of an event are somehow significant, that one is oneself significant. Curiosity implies a dynamic approach, a desire for more knowledge and an ability to direct this desire, therefore an autonomous reflectivity, and crucially as a result of this a degree of pleasure in the process. Necka (1989) defines curiosity as a complex concept:

> 'From the psychological point of view, curiosity is not a homogeneous phenomenon. Its most salient aspects are: need for novelty; avoiding apparent and superficial explanations, in other words inquisitiveness and a tendency to get to the very core of a question of a problem under consideration; tolerance of the unknown, the ambiguous, the complex, and the ill-defined matter'.

Confidence has to be at the root of this process. It is what students so badly need in the first place, and yet, how can we expect them to have such confidence when they have not yet learned to take responsibility for their studies, their choices, their intellectual development. Pleasure if any, is usually retrospective. Most students perhaps embark on higher education too young, before they are ready, and therefore without pleasure or curiosity. When, after several months of intensive grammar revision, they still miss adjectival agreements, it is not because they are unintelligent, but rather because they forget: deep down, they do not see that it matters. Given the chance, most people would perform better later in life, when they have left behind the emotional turmoil of their late teens and have had the chance to develop into reflective and responsible people: the performance of our mature students on our B.Ed course seems to confirm this.

THE SYLLABUS

It is clear that the first step towards achieving some degree of confidence is the acquisition of knowledge, the realisation that one is progressing in some way, and this is chronologically our first priority. The composition of the syllabus is crucial here. Our four-year French B.Ed course is divided into two parts: Part 1 is subject based and therefore determined and taught by the Modern Languages Department. It is practically identical to the first two years of our BA degree. Indeed, students can seek an equivalence after those initial two years in order to complete a BA. Part 2 is mainly school-based, and deals with the Primary curriculum at large. The aims of the language team, when devising a coherent programme for these first two years, were to expose students to a variety of aspects of contemporary France which are largely new to them, and four strands were introduced: language (all four skills), literature (the theatre of Jean-Paul Sartre, contemporary novels, African literature), civilisation (French history, current affairs), popular culture (graphic novels, television, cinema). Apart from the occasional Sartre play or Truffaut film studied for A level, it is indeed new territory for them.

WHY TEACH FRENCH POLITICS ON A B.ED COURSE?

I find the civilisation course, and more specifically the current affairs side of it, a particularly illuminating subject area in which to monitor students' attitude and progress perhaps because I find myself coming up against much resistance at first. This subject is based almost exclusively, both directly and indirectly, on the study of French politics. I realise that knowledge of the French political scene might not appear as a priority in the general scheme of things, in that it might not prove to be that helpful when the students finally face a group of 30 eight year old children.They are after all unlikely to pass on that precise knowledge to their pupils, even if they do teach them French. The answer is that it is not so much that I want them to be able to give me the exact distribution of power between President and Prime Minister under the fifth Republic, or tell me the composition of the current Assemblée Nationale, but rather that this acquired knowledge should give them the confidence to feel capable of understanding current affairs both in and out of France, and of forming a personal opinion about world events at large. I would like to think that the study of this subject would help them develop into intelligent and balanced citizens, able to form their own opinions from conscious principles rather than unthinking habit, and to make a contribution as such. I would eventually like to think that they leave us capable of recognising patterns in world events, that they have an understanding of national and group attitudes which will lead them to greater reflectivity, tolerance, and solidarity. In his proposals for global citizenship education in primary schools, Lynch formulates one of the learning outcomes for pupils as:

> 'autonomous but socially responsible moral judgement and integrity, based on reflective and clarified values'.

We can hardly hope to achieve this in primary school pupils if we cannot achieve it in prospective teachers in higher education. I want my students to feel that world events concern them, whether they happen in Europe or on the other side of the earth. I want them to be curious about the world.

The French angle is important: the students' ignorance in matters of politics is made legitimate by the fact that we are after all tackling a different culture. They consequently have less reason to feel inhibited by their peers, and this should allow us to tackle basic notions which were missed somewhere along the line, such as the distinctions between right and left, or the nature of communism. All too often they carry with them this impression that they have missed something crucial which prevents them from understanding any subsequent knowledge. They then cease to expect to understand what they are exposed to, and this is when any active involvement becomes impossible. This French angle also provides a context for the study of authentic French materials, and thus constitutes an excellent linguistic exercise in its own right. Knowing and understanding what happens in France is actually rather important too in the current European perspective.

B.ED STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TO POLITICS

The task at hand is a complex one as students come to us not only with no prior knowledge of politics, but also with some degree of aversion for the subject. This negative attitude can be explained by the fact that the overwhelming majority seldom read the paper in their own language, let alone in French, seldom watch English news on television, and thus feel utterly intimidated and unconcerned by this subject. It is probably fair to say that political events in their own country usually pass them by. They, for example, discovered who John Smith was when he died, and would have great difficulties to name a few current ministers. This lack of reference in their own culture makes the study of the French political system and current affairs extremely significant in my mind. Starting as they are from nothing, progress and attitude are clearly measurable, and it is rewarding to see every year how, having started in September by establishing who the current French leader is, and to which political party he belongs and what that means, I can engage most students into having intelligent and informed discussions about the French political scene by April or May, and to demonstrate genuine autonomy by the end of the following year.

STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE COURSE

So what happens in those two years, and how is progress ensured and monitored? Intense exposure to the subject matter from day one is the first rule, and good resources are essential here: intensive use is made of satellite TV which allows us to get all but one French channels, and of our language laboratory which is equipped with ten video stations with headphones. The students have access to computers and the library receives various French magazines and newspapers. Our first aim is to get the students to work on authentic sources immediately, and to introduce an important element of independent study which is usually new to them. Clear rules are established from the beginning: daily reading of the French press and viewing of the news on TFI are a requirement of the course. To support them in this imposed autonomous routine, they receive help in making sense of the materials in three different forms: they get a summary and commentary of the news every week which serves as a *corrigé*; I select articles and TV news extracts which we work on in the sessions to help their understanding of the most important news items of the week; the weekly lab sessions are predominantly used to extend the work done in current affairs by giving the students the opportunity to work at their own speed on more detailed comprehension work on the same news extracts or similar ones for which worksheets are produced to guide them, and a substantial amount of time each week is devoted to an in-depth correction; finally and most importantly, background knowledge is ensured in the form of a series of plenaries on topics such as the institutions of the fifth Republic, the political parties, the educational system, the development of Paris since the 1960s. Our second aim is to achieve a worthwhile contribution from the students to the sessions from the earliest days, thus giving them a positive and dynamic approach to the subject. This is done in the form of presentations in pairs at first. Each pair of students makes two presentations per term to the rest of the group: one will be a summary of the news of the week, the other will be a topic which they choose from a list and research. They are encouraged not to script their exposés but to use notes instead in order to allow more spontaneity, and to use some visual support such as posters or OHP transparencies to make their intervention more engaging and easier to follow. Whilst they perceive this as very intimidating at first, their confidence does increase with each new contribution.

"The French angle is important..."

Progress is quite easily monitored and manifests itself in multiple ways: in their presentation skills – relying less and less on their notes; in the quality of their French, both in terms of the complexity of their syntax and the apparition of specialised vocabulary; in the extent of their research both in terms of depth and multiplicity of sources; in the shift from the purely descriptive, in the early days in the form of undigested information, to the analytical, and in the coherence of the argument when they finally present one. It is clear that these presentations in pairs play an essential part in building the students' confidence. The fact that there should be a sharing of responsibility within each pair is essential in the early stages: should the finished product turn out to be confused and insufficiently researched, two people are to blame and nobody finds themselves singled out as incompetent. Conversely, they are more likely to achieve something respectable with this chance at some cooperation. They visibly engage more and more deeply with the task, and can detect their own progress. In most cases, they find themselves tackling painlessly by their third term with us what they had found so difficult at first.

ASSESSMENT

This paves the way for their first assessed piece of research at the end of April which is also the first manifestation of some autonomy, albeit imposed by us. This assessment takes place on their return from a week-long course in Paris where they have researched a subject of their own choice in their free time. It takes the form of a 20 minute individual exposé followed by 10 minutes of questions from three examiners. This is incidentally their first encounter with the external examiner, which understandably adds to the importance and consequently stress of the situation. It is clear that they see the Paris course and oral assessment as a major hurdle among the various demands of their first year. Much initiative and confidence are needed in establishing relevant contacts in a foreign city and in soliciting interviews for their particular research subjects, but it is interesting to see that most do rise to the challenge. Their choice of topic is among other things indicative of the stage they have reached in their development: many will seek advice on this; a few will come up with their own ideas. It is interesting and disappointing to see, however, that both categories will tend to stay clear of anything remotely political. They feel safer with something easily contained such as the study of a particular museum or monument, especially if it has been talked about in the sessions, or with an unthreatening subject such as the study of Paris transport, which appears to remain in the domain of the familiar. Whilst their various choices are entirely valid if often unexciting, I can only conclude that genuine personal interest and curiosity in this field have not yet arisen. The formulation of their research question is also worth looking at. Some still at this stage find it difficult to introduce a real problematic, and stay very much in the descriptive rather than the analytical.

The finished product might turn out more or less successful but what they have gained in the process is invaluable in terms of confidence. In most cases, they have demonstrated real initiative and genuine independence in collecting their data, and have managed to do so in French. There is no doubt that this represents a real turning point: from then on I find that not only does the quality of their presentations in pairs go up substantially, but their attitude changes. I can now expect a spontaneous contribution from some of them: discussion, albeit at a fairly elementary level, appears in the sessions.

TOWARDS CURIOSITY

The real transformation happens the following year though, when this process is taken further after they have spent a period of four consecutive months in a French university on an Erasmus exchange. In their free time they are expected to research another topic of their choice for a longer oral examination of the same format on their return in February. Needless to say the spread of subjects has by then widened considerably and the risks that they have been willing to take have increased in the same proportion. Political subject titles make their first if timid appearance for instance in the form of a study on the integration of the immigrant population in the French city where they lived. They have by then developed their presentation skills, and their four months in France have done much for the accuracy and fluency of their French as well as their maturity and confidence. Coleman's findings on students' time abroad appear to confirm this:

> 'Our students grow while abroad, their L2 experience [is] evidenced by greater maturity, independence, self-reliance, self-awareness and confidence'. ... 'Equally obvious to staff and students but until recently unquantified are the linguistic benefits: students return more fluent and with a wider range of – sometimes ill-distinguished – registers'.

Coleman goes on to talk of

> 'enhanced knowledge and understanding of how L2 functions socially, politically, educationally, and in every other facet of life'.

It is without fail the moment when one looks at the current first year cohort and finds them shockingly immature and unsophisticated in comparison. What has been achieved gets even clearer in the final semester when it becomes possible to rely sometimes on students' contributions for the presentation of new materials, and when discussions in the sessions play a larger part. In the two weeks between the two ballots of the presidential elections, I played extracts of speeches from the two candidates, and felt a real sense of achievement watching the amused reaction of some of them at Monsieur Chirac's various promises and attacks on his opponent. They had been able to see through the rhetoric and spot the many contradictions contained. What it took was sufficient knowledge of the political scene and protagonists on the one hand, and confidence in their own judgment on the other hand. The next step is curiosity.

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Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 7–11

Modern languages in the primary school in France and Scotland

Daniel Tierney
The University of Strathclyde

INTRODUCTION

Having been heavily involved in the Scottish primary project for many years, I was interested in considering the position in France in 1996. I was able to undertake a study visit to France in June, 1996 thanks to funding from the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges. During this period I had the opportunity to speak with trainers at an Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres, with a primary headteacher, primary teachers, with an external language specialist and to observe classes. I was also able to consider in detail materials being used. I had the opportunity to clarify details, seek further views during a follow-up two day meeting with French colleagues and with telephone discussions with another colleague from a different part of France.

THE RECENT HISTORICAL CONTEXT

I will not return to previous attempts, most notably those of the 1960s, but will limit myself to the present attempts to introduce a foreign language into the primary curriculum.

In Scotland a national pilot project was started in 1989 following an announcement by the Secretary of State in which it was stated:

> He is aware that early experiments in this field were not a success and he considers that a better outcome may be achieved with more careful planning, an adequate supply of trained teachers and appropriate level of resources committed to the project.[1]

This would involve some 72 primary schools associated with 12 secondary schools. These schools would include rural and urban areas, affluent suburbs and deprived areas. At the same time, a number of regional projects were initiated by local authorities. In France a project was also started in 1989. This would involve some 20% of schools across the country and, as in Scotland, would include schools in different parts of the country and with different social characteristics.

The pupils

In Scotland it was agreed to start with the final year of primary school before extending it to the penultimate year. However, rural schools and multi stage classes would see some experimentation from year 1 upwards. France's pilot projects were to be with CMl and CM2 – the 9 and 10 year-olds in their final two years of primary schooling.

"In Scotland it was agreed to start with the final year of primary school"

The teachers

In the national pilot in Scotland 11 of the 12 projects involved a visiting specialist teacher from the secondary school teaching the language alongside a primary colleague. The latter would have responsibility for consolidating the foreign language work between specialist visits. One of the projects, Dumfries and Galloway, adopted a different model whereby the primary teachers would be given some language training and would gradually take responsibility for language teaching supported by a team of trainers who would visit the primary schools involved. France adopted a system of language specialists teaching alongside primary teachers. In some cases, about 70%, these would be secondary specialists but many *intervenants agréés*, paid for by the *commune*, would be involved. These included a wide range of anglophones, from native Britons and Americans to French natives who had substantial residence in an English-speaking country.

THE EXTENSION PHASE

In Scotland, the government, encouraged and informed by the successful pilot projects, wished to

Daniel Tierney is National Development Officer for Modern Languages in the Primary School in Scotland but writes here in a personal capacity.

move further. Thus in January, 1993, the Minister announced that:

> Building on these foundations, we now propose that all Scottish primary schools should offer teaching in a modern European language: French, German, Spanish or Italian..... I intend that SOED, in consultation with other interested parties, should devise an implementation strategy, including training arrangements, which should bring to larger numbers of primary teachers the linguistic skills they need to introduce a modern language into the primary curriculum.[2]

The primary teachers would be given a programme of language training with the first phase of training beginning in November 1993.

In France, the government, similarly encouraged and informed, wished to expand the project gradually. The pace of this expansion quickened with the election of a new government. In May 1994, the Education Minister, François Bayrou, announced that languages would be compulsory from age 7. This was followed in 1995 by the statement:

"le Nouveau contrat pour l'école élémentaire prévoit que tous les élèves reçoivent dès l'école élémentaire une initiation à une langue vivante étrangère"

> Jetant les bases d'une rénovation de la politique d'enseignement des langues dans le système éducatif français, le Nouveau contrat pour l'école élémentaire prévoit que tous les élèves reçoivent dès l'école élémentaire une initiation d'une langue vivante étrangère. L'objectif en est de faire progresser, à tous les niveaux, la compétence en langue étrangère et de préparer les jeunes à leur vie de citoyen européen en leur donnant les outils nécessaires à la communication.
>
> Une première sensibilisation se fera dès le CEI. Au cours du cycle des approfondissements, on s'inscrira progressivement dans une problématique d'apprentissage. Cette opération prendra appui sur l'expérience acquise depuis 1989 dans le cadre de l'EILE et concernera les mêmes langues; mais elle s'adresse à un public différent et se voit assigner des modalités et des objectifs nouveaux. C'est un projet ambitieux, les enjeux en sont considérables. Sa mise en oeuvre débutera dès la rentrée 1995, mais sa réalisation complète se fera progressivement, au fur et à mesure que les enseignants pourront s'approprier et maîtriser en profondeur les objectifs et contenus d'apprentissage.[3]

Which languages?

As in the pilot, the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID) decided to proceed with either French or German or Italian or Spanish in primary schools. Perhaps inevitably, French would dominate. In the second year of training, for example, there were 605 volunteers for French compared to 180 for German, 19 for Italian and 28 for Spanish. However, there would be parts of the country where the other language would be taught in both the primaries and the associated secondary.

This was an important point. One of the key factors in deciding which language was to be taught in the primary school was the potential for the pupil to continue with that language in the associated secondary school. Each primary school could decide which language(s) to offer, but it would not be possible to volunteer for training in Italian if the associated secondary taught French or German.

In France, six languages were possible: Arabic, English, German, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish, although English would dominate in most parts of the country.

Language awareness or linguistic competence

The French appear to have leaned more towards language awareness and it is not therefore essential that the child continues with the language started in primary school. The Scots have the aim of increasing the number of years of study of the same language with a view to developing the child's competence in that language. The French B.O. speaks of:

> En effet, les travaux scientifiques des quinze dernières années montrent que, dès la naissance, l'oreille et le cerveau humains ont la faculté de percevoir et traiter des distinctions très fines entre phonèmes appartenant aux langues naturelles. Cette sensibilité aux contrastes phonétiques s'amenuise progressivement au profit des seuls phonèmes de la langue de l'environnement. C'est pour prendre en compte cette faculté que l'école introduit désormais une première sensibilisation à une langue vivante étrangère dès le début du cours élémentaire.[4]

It could be that the same language will be continued but it did not appear to be the case that, within the clusters of French schools I looked at there was any restriction on different schools opting for different languages. Indeed, the voluntary nature of the extension programme appears to mean that some schools may be offering a language experience, while others within the same cluster are not. The B.O. does point out however:

> Cette innovation sera prise en compte dans l'enseignement secondaire. Les acquis de l'école élémentaire feront l'objet d'une évaluation, en 6ème; les programmes et objectifs du collège s'inscriront dans la continuité du travail de l'école élémentaire et les élèves qui n'auraient pas bénéficié de cet apprentissage recevront un enseignement de soutien.[5]

The problem of continuity of language is a considerable one. Even where all the schools in a cluster agree on which languages to offer, not all pupils necessarily transfer to the associated secondary. In Scotland, the cluster principle has been an important one so as to minimise problems. Thus, an attempt is made to train teachers from the same cluster at the same time and for the schools to begin their teaching at the same time. Even with such a coordinated approach, there will still be variations in language experience due to such factors as teacher ability, methods used, etc. Obviously, it makes sense to try to have a similar coordinated experience.

Where language awareness has been chosen the danger lies in using one language as the vehicle. Significant competence may also have been developed but with the danger of a fresh start at secondary. Where parental demand exists for, say, English and the school attempts to meet that demand, there are obvious dangers should those children transfer to a secondary with 4 years of English experience and other pupils have none or a general language awareness. I was unable to work out the tension apparent in the BO between what seemed a 4-year programme in a language with an expression in favour of language awareness.

Which age group?

In France they started with 9/10 year olds. The B.O. of May 1995 gives the signal to begin in CEI, 7–8 year olds.

> Une première sensibilisation se fera dès le CEI.[6]

In Scotland the extension model continues with the final two years pattern established in the pilot. There may be variations as stated in Advice for Schools 1995:

> *Stages at which the foreign language is to be taught*
>
> The MLPS programme is based on the understanding that a foreign language will be introduced into the curriculum of pupils at P6 and P7. The position is, however, complicated by two factors:
>
> - the fact that some of the FL-trained teachers will be the class teacher of pupils at an earlier stage; and
> - the existence of composite classes involving P6 or P7 pupils, together with pupils from P5 or, in the case of multi-stage composites, with younger pupils.
>
> In the first case, the FL-trained teacher might wish to introduce, at an appropriate opportunity, a song or a game in the foreign language to these younger pupils, for example in a topic looking at the celebration of Christmas in other countries. The training programme has not, however, had the intention of providing sufficient trained teachers for the formal FL programme to be extended beyond P6 and P7, and the introduction of some elements of a foreign language to classes at P5 and below are likely to be the exception.[7]

The teachers

As stated earlier, Scotland embarked on a training programme for primary teachers. The role of the secondary specialist teaching in the pilot primary schools would be gradually reduced as the primary teachers gained linguistic confidence and competence. The other schools would come on board in cluster groups through a phased programme of training. In France, where it existed, the *intervenant* model would continue but would be gradually replaced by the primary teachers. Thus in both countries a switch was made towards giving language training and the responsibility to the primary teachers. The reasons appear to be the same: specialists had helped to get the initiative started: lessons had been learned and it was now felt best to return teaching to the primary teachers themselves, as they know their pupils and are trained to teach younger learners.

The training

In Scotland, a national training programme was devised based on a series of competences which had been identified. These competences include such aspects as the language for the self, descriptive language, language for the classroom (e.g. daily routine, organising activities), language for basic art and craft, PE activities, for games, songs, stories, and so on. The training programme lasts 27 days (160 hours) spread throughout the year. Supply cover is provided and the volunteer teachers attend courses during the school day. The major focus of the training is the development of linguistic competence for specific purposes. It is not the intention to produce specialist linguists, but instead to give the primary teachers sufficient linguistic competence within specific areas. The other main aim of the training is to increase teachers' awareness of appropriate methodology for teaching a language to primary age children.

"In Scotland, a national training programme was devised based on a series of competences"

> The programme is designed to give the primary teacher sufficiently high levels of knowledge and skills to operate in defined contexts. It will provide opportunities to develop grammatical accuracy and a good accent. The linguistic competence will enable the teacher to introduce the foreign language naturally and confidently into the daily rythm of the primary classroom and develop it from within suitable contexts in the primary curriculum... The programme will provide primary teachers with opportunities to develop their awareness of the appropriate methodology in teaching a foreign language to young learners.[8]

Residence abroad is not built in to the Scottish programme and depends on local authority arrangements and Lingua funding. In France, training has been devolved to the *Académies*. There appears to be significant variation across the country and from year to year. Within one *Académie*, I was informed that training could be anything from half a day to 9 days and even a full month in the UK. Within the Académie I visited I met teachers who had two days training based on the use of a video produced nationally for use in schools (see below). I also met others who had had a one month course of approximately 80 hours in total. The training content varied according to the providers. The 80 hour stage included lectures on Chomsky and sessions on story telling, festivals, games, daily routine, development of themes, tongue twisters and songs plus lab work on pronunciation.

M Bayrou in an address of May 9, 1994 stated:

> Comme nous ne pouvons pas d'un coup de baguette magique transformer tous les instituteurs en professeurs de langue, le seul moyen est de conduire cet enseignement par des méthodes audio-visuelles, demain par satellite ou cable, dès l'année prochaine par des séances enregistrées.[9]

The BO of May 1995 speaks of:

> **Une formation didactique spécifique**
> Pour faciliter la mise en oeuvre de la sensibilisation des éleves à une langue vivante, seront organisées, dans le cadre des plans departementaux de formation, des séquences de courte durée permettant une initiation des maîtres à l'utilisation des supports pédagogiques qui leur seront proposés. Ces séquences de formation seront orientées vers la forme de travaux pratiques et devront permettre aux enseignants d'assurer le role de médiation qui est nécessairement le leur.[10]

and this is followed in the BO of 1996 by:

> La formation des enseignants, actuellement maillon faible du dispositif, constitue la priorité des actions à conduire dans le département. La diversité des situations, des niveaux de compétences, des besoins des enseignants amène à multiplier les modalités et les offres de formation..... Parallèlement à l'extension des dispostifs de formation à l'utilisation des vidéocassettes, il convient de mettre en place des formations linguistiques, differenciées et adaptées aux différents publics. La formation est didactique, pédagogique et linguistique.[11]

Residence abroad is not built into the programme and may depend on local, national or Lingua funding. In an interestingly large percentage of the teachers I met, it was being personally financed.

In the classroom

The amount of time devoted to the teaching of second language in French schools is suggested in the BO of May 1995:

> Cette sensibilisation peut être atteinte assez rapidement dans le cadre de séquences denses, courtes et fréquentes, dix minutes à un quart d'heure par jour.[12]

During my visit, I generally found that the teachers had amended this in practice to two 30 minute slots per week. In Scotland the time devoted could vary from 30 minutes to 140 minutes per week in the 41 schools I visited. To address this the document Advice for Schools 1995 made the following statement:

> In those classes where the class teacher is the FL trained teacher the opportunities for incidental use of the FL in the daily work of the class will increase the exposure to the foreign lanuage;..... In those classes where the FL is being taught by a teacher other than the class teacher such flexibility will not be readily available. Experience during phase 1 would seem to show that around 60 minutes FL teaching per week is most common, with schools either allocating two × 30 minute blocks per week or a single block of 60 minutes.
>
> It will be important that the time-tabled time available to all pupils at a particular stage is approximately the same, so that learning outcomes may be broadly similar for all pupils.[13]

In Scotland there is no national material for use in the classroom. It is true that a lot of the training materials can be reused with the children, e.g. games, songs, *comptines*, stories, etc. It is also the case that there is no recognised commercial course which is widely used, probably because not many exist and the larger market elsewhere in the UK does not yet exist. The teachers are able to make use of local authority materials in some instances, but many also adapt ideas used in mother tongue teaching of infants.

In France, there exist such commercial materials as *Fanfare, Chatterbox, Stepping Stones* for the teaching of English. Nationally, the *Centre national de documentation pédagogique* (CNDP) has produced and distributed videos, *CEl and CE2 sans frontières*, for use in the classroom. There already exist in English, German, Italian and Portuguese and Spanish. No video exists as yet for the other language, Arabic, specified in the BO of May 1996.

Some mention of their usage has been made in earlier references but the BO of May 1996 makes the following points:

> Comme pour toutes les disciplines de l'école primaire les maîtres demeurent libres du choix des méthodes et des supports à utiliser dans leur classe. Néanmoins, des outils pédagogiques adaptés leur sont proposés afin de les soutenir dans leur tâche. A la rentrée de 1996, les maîtres de CEl, nouveaux volontaires, recevront la série CEl sans frontières. Les enseignants de CE2 se verront proposer la suite de cette série. ...... Le nouvel outil vidéo s'appuie sur l'ensemble des compétences attendues des élèves de CE 2, définies par la direction des écoles en liaison

avec l'inspection générale et l'institut de recherche pédagogique.

Le film présente des élements de la vie quotidienne des pays étrangers, autorisant ainsi une ouverture à la culture et à la civilisation. Le ton, le rhythme restent vifs, enjoués. Des chansons variées, puisées dans le patrimoine musical propre à chaque pays, complètent les chansons originales écrites à partir d'une mélodie unique pour toutes les langues.[14]

CONCLUSION

It was interesting to note how both countries, having started their pilot programmes at the same time, 1989, have gone from there in sometimes similar, sometimes different ways. The French have proposed to go down the language awareness route, although there appears to be considerable development of linguistic competence within their proposals. The Scots have chosen the development of a linguistic competence model. The Scots have largely stuck with 9–11 year olds as in the pilot programmes, whereas the French are attempting to move it further down the primary schools and begin with 7 year olds. In both countries the time devoted to language learning appears to be broadly similar – some 60 minutes per week. Both countries have decided to go forward by asking the primary teachers themselves to deliver the foreign language and switching from secondary or *intervenant* models.

Scotland is attempting to have one of four languages in schools, with French dominating. France is attempting to retain six languages with English dominating.

The Scottish training is a national programme whereas in France training is a local responsibility. On the other hand, France has provided a national resource for use in the classroom, whereas Scotland has not, preferring to leave a common content to evolve at local level.

The scope of this article has not allowed me to venture into the area of pre-service training. That is perhaps another article for the future.

NOTES

1 Circular 1178, January 1989, Scottish Office Education Department.
2 Circular 0113/93, January 1993, Scottish Office Education Department.
3 Bulletin Officiel No 19, May 1995, French Ministry for Education.
4 Bulletin Officiel No 19, May 1995, French Ministry for Education.
5 Bulletin Officiel No 19, May 1995, French Ministry for Education.
6 Bulletin Officiel No 19, May 1995, French Ministry for Education.
7 Advice for Schools 1995, Scottish Office Education and Industry Department.
8 Introduction to the National Training Programme, 1993, Scottish Office Education and Industry Department.
9 Bayrou, François, Nouveau contrat pour l'école, 9 May 1994
10 Bulletin Officiel No 19, May 1995, French Ministry for Education.
11 Bulletin Officiel No 20, May 1996, French Ministry for Education.
12 Bulletin Officiel No 19, May 1995, French Ministry for Education.
13 Advice for Schools 1995, Scottish Office Education and Industry Department.
14 Bulletin Officiel No 20, May 1996, French Ministry for Education.

Notes for Contributors

Contributions

The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles, reports and other contributions, which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French. Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

(a) Articles of about 3000 words.
(b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
(c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (but longer reviews or review articles may also be accepted). Please send your contributions direct to the Reviews Editor.

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation

Type with double spacing.

Please give your article one title only, not a title and a sub-title, and divide it up with (short) sub-headings. An abstract of about 50 words should be provided.

Give full references for all sources quoted, using the Harvard system. In the text the author's name, year of publication and page number where relevant should be quoted in brackets, e.g.: (Jones,1993, 27).

Please send three copies of the article and keep another for yourself.

Clean copy and articles supplied with IBM or Macintosh compatible disc (MS Word preferred) are of great assistance in reducing printing costs. Graphs, pie charts and other diagrams should be supplied as camera ready, hard copy. If prepared on a computer, graphics files on disk are also of use, presented as TIF or postscript files.

Illustrations

Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing

In order to be considered for inclusion in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by Ist March and Ist September. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 12–13

A holiday in Luxembourg?!

Jane Renton
Beath High School, Cowdenbeath, Fife

Inspectors from Germany and Romania, headteachers from Sicily and Paris, teacher trainers from Finland, Italy and Poland – and a Principal Teacher of French from Cowdenbeath! How did I end up spending a week in Luxembourg last November in such exalted company?

ARION 'study visits for educational decision-makers' are part of the SOCRATES programme, specifically part of the 'action' which promotes 'exchange of information and experience of education systems and policy'. As chair of SALT and a member of ALL's Executive Council, I was delighted to be nominated by ALL to take part in the ARION study visit last year.

"These discussion sessions led eventually to the group report"

The visits are designed to help participants take account of approaches adopted elsewhere and provide them with better and more up-to-date information concerning education throughout the EU and the EFTA-EEA countries. Each year the programme of study visits is directed towards a particular set of topics and in 1996/97 topics are drawn from the following five general areas:

- education systems and their values
- 'players' in the educational process – pupils, teachers and parents
- education – the curriculum and the tools available
- the school and its environment
- language teaching

It was not difficult for me to choose my area of interest and so I found myself in the Grand Duchy on a study visit entitled 'L'enseignement des Langues au Luxembourg'. There were also language teachers from Madeira, the Czech Republic and Wales in the group – a total of 12 people from all over Europe. The working language during the visit was French, with bits of English, German and Italian thrown in!

The week's programme consisted of:

- visits to the Ministry of Education for an introduction to the Luxembourg education system on the first morning and an evaluation session on the last day
- visits to various schools
- a walking tour of Luxembourg town
- evening discussion sessions when members of the group reflected on the day's activities and exchanged information on the education systems, language teaching and everyday life in their respective countries. These discussion sessions led eventually to the group report, the production of which is a statutory requirement of every ARION study visit.

The following brief outline of the Luxembourg education system will help to place into context the observations made in the group report.

Nursery education

This is compulsory from age 4. Children attend for five half-days per week. The language used is Luxembourgeois.

Primary education

Pupils attend from age 6–12 (six years). Pupils attend six mornings and three afternoons (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) per week. One teacher presents all the basic subjects but there is no concept of an integrated curriculum; there is a statutory number of periods per week for discrete subjects such as RE, French, German, arithmetic, science, music, art, PE etc. There are no headteachers in primary schools, classroom teachers being directly responsible to the Ministry of Education.

The importance of Luxembourgeois is greatly reduced at this stage, as it is taught for only 1×50 minute period per week throughout then six years of primary school. Teaching in primary schools is conducted in German. There are 8–9 periods a week of specific German teaching in the first two years of primary, dropping to five periods a week in primaries 3–6. French is introduced in the second semester of primary per week. Thus around 35% of the primary curriculum is given over to language teaching.

Secondary education

Post-primary, the system is selective. 40% of pupils enter 'l'enseignement secondaire général', i.e. the academic stream, while 60% go to a lycée technique. pupils spend seven years at secondary school. Pupils in the academic lycées are aiming for the 'baccalauréat' and eventually university, while pupils in the lycée technique aim for a variety of vocational qualifications, the most advanced of which can lead to university entrance.

Languages in the Academic Lycée

In first year all pupils study Luxembourgeois, German and French. In second year pupils choose instead of Luxembourgeois, either Latin or English. On entering their fourth year, all pupils take a further language, either Spanish or Italian. Ancient Greek is also taught.

Between a third and a half of the curriculum is given over to language learning in the first three years. In the final four years, pupils doing a literary option for the 'baccalauréat' will spend between half and two-thirds of their time on languages.

For languages, teaching is essentially in the language itself, but for other subjects the teaching language is German in the first three years and French in the final four years, except for maths which is always taught in French.

Languages in the lycée technique

Pupils continue to study French and German and may also take English. They may spend up to 12 out of 30 lessons a week studying languages, depending on their options, with no pupil doing fewer than four periods a week at any stage.

Luxembourg has a high immigrant population and, in the *lycées techniques*, extra language classes are provided for immigrant pupils to increase their proficiency in French and German. A large number of immigrants are from Portugal and Italy. It is recognised that for these 'latinophone' pupils German is very difficult and they are at a disadvantage when German is the language of the classroom.

A few personal observations

Returning to Scotland, I was forced to conclude that there was little or nothing of what I observed of teaching methodology in Luxembourg classrooms which I could adopt in my own department to improve language learning.

The message I have taken home, however, is the importance of the context in which language learning takes place.

Young people are *motivated* to learn languages because they have to learn them in order to succeed at school. This situation pertains because of the geographical and political situation in their country.

"Between a third and a half of the curriculum is given over to language learning in the first three years"

Young people in Luxembourg are also *exposed* to foreign languages to an infinitely greater degree than their UK counterparts. Am I the only person who feels like throwing something at the television when, as soon as someone starts speaking 'foreign', they are dubbed over in English instead of being subtitled? About the only exposure to foreign languages our pupils have outside the classroom is when they hear 'nul points' during the Eurovision song contest or 'Vorsprung durch Technik' on a car advert! And have you noticed how all know these expressions?

Use of target language visits, creating a foreign ambience in the classroom by displaying posters and realia... these are ways in which we can attempt to increase our pupils' exposure to foreign languages and provide a favourable context for language learning... but our job is always going to be difficult compared to that of our colleagues in Luxembourg!

Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 14–17

Séjour d'étude Arion: rapport de groupe L'enseignement des langues

«Mir Wëlle Bleiwe, wat mir sein»
(«Nous voulons rester ce que nous sommes»)

«De Feiervon»
Michel Lentz

Thème 12.5 L'enseignement des langues
Luxembourg – 11/15 novembre 1996
Rapporteur: Meitinger Guy-Roger
Nb de participants: 12
Pays représentés: Allemagne, Finlande, France, Italie (2), Pologne (2), Portugal, République Tchèque, Roumanie, Royaume-Uni (Ecosse, Pays de Galle)
Institutions visitées: Ministère de l'Education Nationale, Lycée Technique du Centre, Athénée de Luxembourg, Ecole primaire de Walferdange, Ecole primaire de la rue du Commerce, Centre de Langues de Luxembourg

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Situé géographiquement au carrefour de deux empires linguistiques et culturels, le Luxembourg, entité politique et terre de forte immigration internationale, participe de façon originale au contexte engendré par cette situation particulière.

Aux trois langues historiques, le luxembourgeois, l'allemand et le français, est venue s'ajouter l'anglais, lingua franca d'un nouvel empire, celui des échanges économiques ainsi que les langues «exogènes», des migrants.

Soucieux d'affirmer et de préserver une identité nationale forte et marquant une préoccupation constante quant à la nécessité de faire fructifier le patrimoine linguistique acquis, l'Etat luxembourgeois a confié au système éducatif la tâche toute particulière et redoutable consistant dans le même mouvement à former ses citoyens et à accueillir ainsi qu'à intégrer au mieux les populations scolaires migrantes nouvellement arrivées dans le pays et dont la permanence n'est nullement assurée.

Le Luxembourg se retrouve donc face au défi de devoir faire prendre corps, au sein de son système scolaire, aux valeurs nationales, éléments identitaires forts, et de prendre en compte les réalités linguistiques et culturelles qui lui sont apportées par les nouveau arrivants tout en les insérant dans leur nouveau milieu de vie.

Richesse ou faiblesse, quadrature du cercle, c'est un enjeu majeur qui est ici en cause: l'identité nationale, la qualité du développement économique, la stabilité sociale du pays.

Face à ces déterminations géographiques, historiques, économiques, sociales, culturelles et linguistiques, les autorités nationales ont développé un processus original d'enseignement qui n'a pas d'équivalent dans les pays représentés par les participants à ce séjour d'étude et qui permet, selon les directives officielles, de prendre en compte au plus juste les différents éléments en interaction.

UNE VOLONTÉ AFFIRMÉE DE SCOLARISATION

Contrairement à ce qui se passe dans les autres pays de l'Union Européenne, le Luxembourg a rendu la fréquentation du jardin d'enfants obligatoire de 4 à 6 ans.

Au delà de l'acquisition des apprentissages «théoriques», de base, c'est la volonté d'une socialisation en luxembourgeois qui est la justification essentielle de cette obligation.

Où mieux, en effet, qu'au jardin d'enfants peut-on s'imprégner «naturellement» de la langue nationale ainsi que des règles formelles de la vie scolaire, figuration des rites sociaux?

Soulignons que par la suite l'enseignement du luxembourgeois en tant que discipline d'étude se réduit à sa plus simple expression, c'est-à-dire à une heure dans l'emploi du temps hebdomadaire de l'école primaire et qu'il disparaît du plan d'études dès la deuxième année de l'enseignement secondaire.

Il faut noter que 40% environ des enfants qui fréquentent l'enseignement pré-scolaire et primaire sont d'origine étrangère. Leur répartition géographique et au sein même des écoles est assez inégale, créant de fait des lieux de forte concentration à côté d'autres d'où ils sont à peu près absents.

Cet état de fait a déterminé la mise en place de cours adaptés (classes d'accueil pour les primo-arrivants, cours d'appui) aux différents niveaux du système éducatif.

Ces classes spéciales fonctionnent avec un effectif de 10 à 15 élèves maximum alors qu'une division «ordinaire» comptent de 20 à 25 élèves.

Cet enseignement différencié permet de pallier, au cours de la scolarité, les retards ou les difficultés rencontrés par certains élèves.

En plus de ces fort bonnes conditions numériques, les membres du groupe ont particulièrement apprécié la haute qualité de l'environnement scolaire: architecture des locaux et matériel disponible.

Cependant ce dispositif de classes d'accueil intégrées n'existe que dans l'enseignement secondaire technique, L'ESG ne réalisant que des cours d'appui ponctuels.

UNE VOLONTÉ CONFIRMÉE D'UN PLURILINGUISME DOMINÉ

Dès la première année du primaire, l'utilisation du luxembourgeois cède le pas à l'allemand comme langue d'enseignement pour l'apprentissage de la lecture ainsi que du calcul. L'allemand devient langue enseignée et langue d'enseignement. Le luxembourgeois demeure la langue de communication interpersonnelle.

Au milieu de la deuxième année débute l'étude du français à raison de six leçons par semaine sur un total de trente leçons de cinquante à cinquante-cinq minutes.

Le temps d'enseignement des langues en tant que matière d'étude représente de la première à la sixième année du primaire de 30 à 43.3% du temps scolaire. Le reste du temps est consacré à l'enseignement des autres disciplines. Dans l'enseignement secondaire, pour le cycle des trois premières années, du tiers à la moitié du temps scolaire est consacré à l'étude des langues. La langue d'enseignement privilégiée durant ce cycle est l'allemand. Dans les quatre années suivantes, pour l'orientation littéraire, la proportion passe, en fonction des options, de la moitié aux deux tiers du temps. Pour l'orientation scientifique, cela représente environ un tiers du temps global des études.

La langue d'enseignement privilégiée pour cette période est le français. Dans l'enseignement technique, le poids de l'enseignement des langues représente 9 à 12 leçons hebdomadaires dans le premier cycle et de 4 à 12 dans le second en fonction des spécialités choisies.

Aucun système éducatif des pays représentés par les membres du groupe n'offre autant d'exposition aux langues considérées à la fois comme matières d'enseignement et comme langues d'enseignement que le système éducatif luxembourgeois.

Au niveau du primaire, au luxembourgeois vient s'adjoindre l'allemand, puis le français: à celui du secondaire, apparait l'anglais dans le 1er cycle, et, dès le second cycle, les élèves ont le choix entre l'espagnol ou l'italien.

Ainsi donc, si l'on exclut les langues anciennes, latin et grec, un élève scolarisé au Luxembourg a la possibilité d'apprendre et d'utiliser jusqu'à cinq langues durant ses études obligatoires.

De plus, si l'on considère que les enfants de migrants ont la possibilité de suivre un enseignement dans leur langue maternelle assuré par les Ambassades de leurs pays d'origine, c'est une sixième langue qu'il faut prendre en compte!

Situation totalement atypique dans les pays des participants où, langue régionale ou minoritaire comprise, le nombre des langues vivantes «disponibles» ne dépasse pas le chiffre de quatre dans l'enseignement secondaire et de deux pour le primaire dans le meilleur des cas.

DU PLURILINGUISME AU PLURICULTURALISME?

Un élément frappant de la démarche didactique retenue est l'accent mis sur le caractère instrumental des langues enseignées. Le fait qu'elles deviennent rapidement langue d'enseignement renforce cet aspect.

Les langues sont envisagées comme .«outil au service de» beaucoup plus que comme matière en soi et leur apprentissage obéit plus à leur acquisition et leur maîtrise techniques et aux vertus de cette maîtrise qu'à leur valeur culturelle propre.

La langue comme outil de communication orale semble passer avant la langue véhicule de culture et de civilisation (les grandes oeuvres, «les monuments de la civilisation...») même si pour certains cette dichotomie n'a pas lieu d'être.

En tout état de cause, il ne s'agit pas de faire fond sur les cultures étrangères et de proposer une approche inter ou pluri-culturelle, mais bien de mettre en perspective la culture nationale et d'en promouvoir les valeurs.

En cela, la pratique correspond bien à la volonté affirmée d'intégration et «d'éducation citoyenne».

Il nous est apparu au cours de nos visites d'écoles que la pratique pedagogique était fortement centrée sur la langue et le vecteur «professeur-manuel» beaucoup plus que sur l'apprenant.

D'autre part, la langue mise en cause s'approchait d'avantage d'un idéal de la langue, voire d'une langue idéale (effets d'hypercorrection et de purisme) et privilégiait un niveau d'expression très normé, s'inscrivant quelque peu en porte à faux avec les déclarations initiales de «pédagogie de la communication», expression se limitant très strictement aux éléments «autorisés» par le programme et le thème de la leçon du jour à l'exclusion de tout élément de langue appris hors contexte scolaire.

Cela avait pour effet de réduire la langue utilisée à un produit scolaire éloigné de la pratique langagière que les élèves peuvent exercer dans la langue considérée en dehors de l'école.

Si l'importance de la normalisation linguistique n'est pas rejetée par les membres du groupe Arion le développement d'une culture uniquement scolaire de la langue leur est apparu comme fortement en rupture avec les pratiques mises en oeuvre dans leurs pays respectifs ainsi qu'avec les recommandations du Conseil de l'Europe en matière d'enseignement des langues vivantes étrangères. L'utilisation d'un «manuel unique», outil de référence rédigé le plus souvent par un comité d'enseignants réunis au sein d'une commission ministérielle, ouvrage qui est utilisé avec ses périphériques (cahier d'exercices, supports audio) vient renforcer cette tendance.

Le système global mis en place apparaît très cohérent et très hiérarchisé, structuré avec rigueur. La cohésion du système apparaît telle qu'elle semble justifier à elle seule l'absence, remarquable aux yeux du groupe, de Directeur dans les écoles primaires. Cet élément traditionnel de regulation, le directeur, «courroie de transmission» du système n'a plus de raison d'être dans cette configuration.

«UNE ÉCOLE ÉLITAIRE POUR TOUS» OU UN SYSTÈME MALTHUSIEN?

Les langues se veulent offertes à tous et non à une élite. L'investissement global consenti par le Luxembourg dans ce domaine n'a aucun équivalent dans les pays respectifs des membres du groupe.

Une telle entreprise force le respect, mais elle doit aussi être envisagée à l'aune du taux de «productivité» générale du système.

Un travail de fond sur ce thème (évaluation quantitative et qualitative du système éducatif luxembourgeois) a été engagé par le projet Périclès.

Tous les éléments ne sont pas encore connus, mais en l'état actuel des choses, il apparaît que pour une promotion d'élèves arrivés au terme de l'école primaire, et après avoir subi les épreuves de l'examen d'entrée en 6ème, 40% entrent dans l'enseignement secondaire général (ESC) et 60% dans l'enseignement secondaire technique (EST). Pour les élèves de l'ESG, chaque année voit 5 à 12% d'une promotion redoubler ou passer dans l'EST. Le taux global de réussite au baccalauréat se situe aux environs de 50%.

Enfin, sur une promotion entrée à l'université, 40%, plus ou moins, des étudiants concluent le cycle d'études pour lequel ils se sont inscrits.

Ces chiffres laissent apparaître une grande volatilité du système qui peut prendre pour nom sélectivité. L'ESG constitue l'épine dorsale du système, sa voie de référence, et l'EST décomposé en trois filières «dégressives» la voie médiane ainsi que de «délestage».

Ce qui nous semble contrariant dans ce schéma, sur lequel nous ne porterons aucun jugement de valeur *a priori*, est que la maîtrise des langues y joue un rôle prépondérant et que ceux qui profitent à plein de l'excellence du système sont eux-mêmes des élèves d'excellence mais fortement minoritaire.

LES LIMITES DU SYSTÈME

Le système trouve ainsi ses limites, non pas dans sa philosophie, mais dans sa pratique qui minore l'accomplissement des principes de base revendiqués.

L'appareil de remédiation mis en place tout au long du système, fort intéressant en soi et générant des pratiques pédagogiques autres, ne semble pas structurellement opératoire en dehors de l'EST où il reste globalement confiné. Les réussites en ce domaine, permettant un passage de l'élève en ESG, nous ont été présentées comme réelles mais tout à fait exceptionnelles.

L'investissement consenti pour l'enseignement des langues, en temps comme en moyen, est considérable.

Cependant l'on peut rester perplexe à l'égard des résultats obtenus, en fonction des objectifs visés et des déclarations initiales d'intention.

Les travaux du groupe d'étude Périclès nous en diront plus à terme sur cet aspect des choses ainsi que sur l'efficience globale du système éducatif.

Ce projet ayant pour thème «la qualité de l'enseignement» a retenu tout particulièrement l'attention et l'intérêt des membres du groupe. Initié en 1993, il a pour finalité de

> «vérifier si les programmes scolaires de l'enseignement secondaire permettent à l'élève d'acquérir une culture générale qui le rende à même d'aborder des études supérieures d'une part et de s'intégrer dans le monde du travail et dans la société luxembourgeoise d'autre part.
>
> Le produit final attendu est une nouvelle version du document *Horaires et programmes*. Par le biais d'une structure nouvelle et d'une formulation adaptée à chaque branche, ce document devra mentionner les objectifs, les contenus, la didactique ainsi que l'évaluation des prestations des élèves. Par ailleurs, et ce en vue d'une conception équilibrée de la formation générale, il veillera à ce que les programmes s'accordent entre eux».

«Périclès» pose finalement très clairement la problématique à laquelle aboutissent les membres du groupe au terme de leurs travaux d'observation et d'analyse, et se trouve en phase avec les préoccupations de chacun dans son domaine respectif de responsabilité.

UN LIEU ORIGINAL DANS LE PAYSAGE ÉDUCATIF LUXEMBOURGEOIS: LE CENTRE DE LANGUES

Ecole relevant du Ministère de l'Education Nationale, ouverte à tous et en particulier aux adultes, le «Centre de Langues de Luxembourg» offre la possibilité de se former en langues, «les langues du Luxembourg», mais aussi celles de l'Europe et d'autres encore.

Le Centre offre un système de certifications très complet qui permet de valider les acquis mais aussi d'opérer des bilans de connaissance.

Résolument tournée vers *la pratique de la langue*, la langue réelle, la pédagogie mise en oeuvre repose fermement sur l'interaction communicative et fait une large place aux réalités interculturelles.

Jeune et dynamique, l'équipe pédagogique propose un parcours d'études innovant et original qui a séduit l'ensemble des membres du groupe qui ont trouvé là des éléments forts intéressants, tant dans l'organisation pédagogique, méthodologique que pratique qui pourront à l'occasion être réinvestis.

EN GUISE DE CONCLUSION

Ce séjour d'étude, d'une grande richesse, a apporté beaucoup aux différents participants, non pas tant du point de vue des éléments «transposables et réutilisables» dans leurs pays respectifs que du point de vue de la qualité des échanges et de la réflexion.

Qualité des échanges avec nos hôtes luxembourgeois, mais aussi entre les participants qui se sont très vite constitués en tant que groupe.

Dans les réunions de synthèse organisées en fin de chaque journée, chacun a pu confronter ses observations, ses remarques, ses idées et les mettre en perspective avec celles des collègues, enrichissant de la sorte la réflexion commune suscitée par les visites et les rencontres faites sur le terrain.

De plus, la présentation, documents à l'appui, que chacun a pu faire du système éducatif de son pays d'origine et des pratiques d'enseignement des langues qui y sont mises en oeuvre, a permis une meilleure connaissance mutuelle, mais aussi de mieux comprendre les modes d'approches possibles.

Enrichissement réciproque, meilleure connaissance des uns et des autres, mais également certitude et volonté de maintenir les liens tissés à l'occasion de cette rencontre en fonction des préoccupations professionnelles de chacun et de se retrouver dans l'approfondissement commun d'un des aspects que cette semaine a mis en exergue.

Enfin, au delà des relations intellectuelles et professionnelles, ce séjour a aussi permis de tisser de réels liens d'amitié, et si la qualité de la réflexion a été grande, la convivialité n'a pas été de reste.

Que tous ceux qui ont permis aux douze membres du groupe de se rencontrer, de travailler ensemble, de se comprendre et de s'apprécier soient vivement remerciés.

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Violence, patronage and politics in Corsica

Bernard Foster
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In May 1992, 15 spectators were killed when a stand collapsed at Bastia's football stadium. A week later, three bombs exploded, apparently in retaliation against the incident. In March1989 Jean-Baptiste Orsoni was killed by stray bullets after the results of a municipal election were declared at Ajaccio Orsoni fell victim to the traditional volley of gunfire which is a feature of every election in Corsica.

These two incidents may appear unrelated but bear witness to an important aspect of Corsica's political life – the culture of the gun and the culture of the bomb. Political life in Corsica cannot be explained merely by reference to the main political groups and their policies, the local economy, or the powers and procedures of elected bodies. Contemporary Corsica politics have been shaped by more deeply-rooted factors – the tradition of self-help and self-defence, the clan system, immigration and the culture of violence, honour and revenge. This article will attempt to examine the place of violence in modern Corsican life and politics firstly by looking briefly at some aspects of traditional Corsican society – 'The Old Order', and the extent to which its vestiges have survived to the present day. Secondly, we shall examine criminal violence in the Corsica of today, and finally, violence in Corsican politics, i.e. its role in the activities of the nationalist movement.

"an important aspect of Corsica's political life – the culture of the gun and the culture of the bomb"

THE OLD ORDER – GUNS, HONOUR AND PATRONAGE

The first thing that must be said is that Corsica is not Sicily. It is tempting to draw parallels between what happens in Corsica and the brutality and violence of Sicily with its systematic murder of political figures, rival gang chiefs and its so-called code of honour. There is no all-embracing criminal organisation like the Mafia in Corsica, although some commentators have pointed to an increase in crimes of violence in recent years and have imputed that to a Mafia-type organisation. Nevertheless, some similarities do exist between the traditional societies of the two islands.

Reference has already been made to Corsica's gun-culture. In the rural communities of nineteenth century Corsica the gun was essential as a hunting weapon. But it was more than that, for it became a symbol of virility for a man to carry a gun. Stephen Wilson[1] refers to the carrying of firearms as an inalienable right. Boys would be presented with a gun as a token of coming of age. On several occasions, the authorities attempted to ban or at least control the possession of firearms, but to no avail. This tradition has continued down to the present day for, as one observer has put it: 'It is an impoverished Corsican home which possesses just one weapon'.[2] Corsicans, in common with other Mediterranean peoples, take to the hills at weekends to blast out of existence anything that moves, whether edible or not. This love of the gun has been traced back to the fact that much of the population lived in isolated villages with no police force to keep order and had to defend themselves against outsiders – whether foreigners or indeed the next village, with whom there would often be bitter rivalries.

The gun culture is made more deadly when taken in conjunction with the feuding, or vendetta, which was endemic in nineteenth century Corsica. According to Stephen Wilson[3], the feud reached its peak in the 1840s but was present throughout the century. Wilson gives details of a number of feuds lasting several decades in which appreciable numbers of people were killed. The feud at Frassato between the Antona and Franceschi families for example[4] involved the deaths of 19 people over a period of 14 years, while another feud at Arbellara lasted from 1826 until 1849 and continued into the 1860s in the form of intense political rivalry. According to Wilson, the origins of a feud were

Au petit déjeuner

a
J'aime manger des céréales. D'habitude je bois un verre de lait.

b
Le matin je n'ai jamais faim. Je ne mange rien, mais je bois toujours un grand crème ou un café au lait.

c
Je prends un jus d'orange avec un croissant ou du pain.

d
Je mange un steak avec des légumes. Délicieux!

e
Je prends toujours de la soupe pour commencer.

f
Si je n'ai pas beaucoup de temps, je mange une pomme ou une banane.

g
Je mange un yaourt et je bois du café.

h
Je mange des tartines avec du beurre et de la confiture.

i
Moi, je mange un sandwich au jambon ou des frites.

1 Qu'est-ce qu'on mange au petit déjeuner? Lis les textes. Est-ce que l'affirmation est:
très probable peu probable pas probable du tout?

Exemple: a = très probable

2 Arrange les lettres pour trouver des choses à manger ou à boire au petit déjeuner.

a) SANTCROIS

b) RTINTAE

c) ANIP

d) ESCERLEA

★ Qu'est-ce que tu manges au petit déjeuner?
Qu'est-ce que tu bois?

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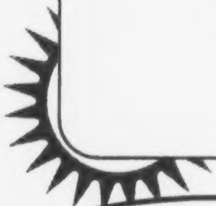
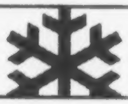
Quel temps fait-il?

1 Lis les textes et dessine des scènes.

Il fait beau. Je vais jouer au football.

Il pleut! Je n'aime pas le camping quand il pleut.





Je suis à la montagne. Il neige. Je fais du ski.

Je ne peux pas lire mon magazine. Il y a du vent.

Je suis à la campagne pour faire un pique-nique. Il fait chaud mais il y a des nuages.

Je suis au bord de la mer. Je porte un short et un T-shirt, mais il fait froid.

★ Invente d'autres scènes. Ecris des textes dans des bulles.

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PAYS ET CULTURES

Aux Jeux Olympiques

45

1

Combien de médailles? Lis les résultats. Complète la grille pour un magazine britannique.

A la fin des Jeux,
les Etats-Unis ont
cent une médailles.
Ensuite:
la Russie a soixante-trois médailles,
l'Allemagne a soixante-cinq médailles
la Grande-Bretagne a quinze médailles
la France a trente-sept médailles
l'Italie a trente-cinq médailles
le Canada a vingt-deux médailles
l'Australie a quarante et une médailles
la Chine a cinquante médailles
la Pologne a dix-sept médailles
l'Espagne a seize médailles
l'Ethiopie a trois médailles
la Finlande a quatre médailles
la Grèce a huit médailles

NUMBER OF MEDALS PER COUNTRY

Australia	•		•
Canada	•		•
China	•		•
Ethiopia	•		•
Finland	•		•
France	•		•
Germany	•		•
Great Britain	•		•
Greece	•		•
Italy	•		•
Poland	•		•
Russia	•		•
Spain	•		•
USA	•	101	•

2

Qui fait une erreur?

Albert: L'Allemagne a plus de médailles que la France.
Marie: L'Espagne a plus de médailles que la Grande-Bretagne.
Pierre: La Finlande a plus de médailles que l'Australie.

VOCABULAIRE

plus de	more
que	than

3

C'est quel pays?

Exemple: 3 + 11 + 8 = 22. C'est le Canada.

a une médaille d'or, huit médailles d'argent et six médailles de bronze (= total …)

C'est ....

b quinze médailles d'or, sept médailles d'argent et quinze médailles de bronze (= total …)

C'est ....

c seize médailles d'or, vingt-deux médailles d'argent et douze médailles de bronze (= total …)

C'est ....

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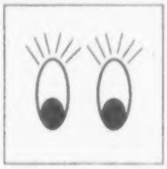
L'ami(e) idéal(e)

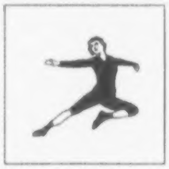
		je suis d'accord	cela n'a pas d'importance	je ne suis pas d'accord
1	Il/Elle doit être grand(e).			
2	Il/Elle doit être beau/belle.			
3	Il/Elle doit avoir les yeux bleus.			
4	Il/Elle doit être intelligent(e).			
5	Il/Elle doit aimer le sport.			
6	Il/Elle doit parler français.			
7	Il/Elle doit aimer les animaux.			
8	Il/Elle doit avoir les cheveux courts.			
9	Il/Elle doit être sympa.			
10	Il/Elle doit être mince.			
11	Il/Elle doit savoir danser.			
12	Il/Elle doit être riche.			
13	Il/Elle doit plaire à mes parents.			
14	Il/Elle doit être poli(e).			
15	Il/Elle doit porter des vêtements à la mode.			
16	Il/Elle doit avoir le sens de l'humour.			
17	Il/Elle doit être artistique.			
18	Il/Elle doit prendre une douche tous les jours.			
19	Il/Elle doit se laver régulièrement les cheveux.			
20	Il/Elle doit être timide.			

1 Regarde la liste 1–20. Trouve une phrase pour chaque dessin.

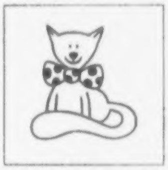
a



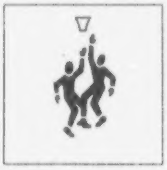
b



c



d



2 Qui est l'ami(e) idéal(e)? Coche la grille pour donner ton opinion.

★ Ecris un portrait de ton ami(e) idéal(e). Copie les phrases 1–20, dans l'ordre de leur importance pour toi. (Par exemple, commence avec la plus importante.) Si tu veux, invente d'autres phrases.

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most frequently over property, animals, grazing rights and, underlying this, the political power which went with these material possessions. Many feuds began when animals grazed on somebody else's land – either because they strayed, or because they were deliberately taken there. Frequently animals were killed and property damaged before there were human victims.

Feuds lasted so long because the nineteenth century Corsican male had an exaggerated sense of honour. Gestures and words as well as actions could be taken as an attack upon one's honour.[5] And, Wilson tells us, a Corsican's honour was especially besmirched if there was some perceived slight to one of his womenfolk or to his gun!

A number of individuals involved in vendettas would be forced to go into hiding in the countryside ('maquis') and become 'bandits'. As with the vendetta, a certain mythology surrounds the Corsican bandit. The myth has been handed down of the Robin Hood type bandit avenging wrongs, and in all things acting 'honourably'. Wilson, however,[6] makes the point that in reality bandits were usually unpopular with the populace who perceived them as no more than parasites. Nevertheless, bandits were often given shelter and support by local populations, and would not, on most occasions, be betrayed to the authorities. The myth would have us believe that this was due to a feeling of honour and loyalty towards the bandit against the common enemy. Prosper Mérimée's short story *Mateo Falcone* tells a tale of a father who killed his own son because the latter had betrayed an outlaw to the authorities and had thus besmirched the family's honour. Only the boy's death by his father's hand could redeem that honour. The story is an ancient one and corresponds less to reality than to a mythical conception of honour. In reality, bandits most frequently met their ends through betrayal.

A common criminal activity among bandits was extortion and from the 1880s a favourite target for extortion rackets were those benefiting from Corsica's nascent tourist trade,[7] a trade which continues to be targeted by some of today's nationalists.

Another aspect of the 'Old order' which is of relevance to today's politics in Corsica is the clan. Traditionally, the clan was a wealthy influential family of the extended type, along with those workers dependent on it. Indeed, the dependence was mutual, each side having rights and duties towards the other. In the nineteenth century the clan would afford its dependents, or 'clients', a degree of protection and help when in need – financial, legal or medical, or would pull strings to gain employment, pensions or other benefits. But in return the client would be expected to show unwavering loyalty to the clan. Wilson tells us that a client could, for example, be expected to be a pliant juror,[8] give supportive testimony in court and, after the institution of universal suffrage, vote for the clan leader or nominee at election time.

The Corsica of old has all but disappeared – no longer is Corsican society composed principally of isolated rural communities practising a traditional pastoral agriculture. Today well over 50% of the island population reside in the two large towns of Ajaccio and Bastia, while agriculture employs only 3.1% of the working population.[9] The long drawn-out feud is no longer a feature of social life and the clan system no longer operates in the same way. The last of the bandits were eliminated by the forces of law and order in November 1931.[10]

And yet some features of Corsican life could be linked to those aspects of nineteenth century life noted above. Most obviously is the notion of revenge and the high level of violence, and closely connected with the tendency to violence is the propensity to take what is generally referred to as 'direct action'. In April 1985, for example, a group of hill farmers slaughtered a large number of sheep outside the *Préfecture in* Bastia to protest about falling prices. But this is by no means confined to Corsica.

The clan system may no longer operate as it used to, but it still survives. The most prominent clan leaders are politicians, such as Jean-Paul de Rocca Sera, member of the National Assembly, President of the Corsican Assembly, and formerly mayor of Porto Vecchio. Rocca Sera is living proof that political labels are meaningless in Corsica, since he has moved from Left to Right during his career, and this has had no effect on his political performance. In Corsica electors vote for the man rather than for an ideology or a party label.

We should also note that the same people are elected time after time, and indeed, are eventually replaced by their children. The Rocca Sera and Giacobbi families have been in public life, father to son, since the eighteenth century. Jean-Paul de Rocca Sera was replaced in 1992 as mayor of Porto Vecchio by his son, Camille. Similarly, Emile Zuccharelli, mayor of Bastia, took that office over from his father Jean, and Paul Giacobbi replaced, as mayor of Venaco, his father François.[11]

"families have been in public life, father to son, since the eighteenth century"

Patronage continues to be part of Corsican life, in the form of corruption. Much evidence was unearthed in the early 1980s by the nationalists to implicate the mayor of Bastia in the fraudulent awarding of the contract to rebuild the harbour to close friends. And in March 1992 the mayor of Cauro was tried for receiving an extra 700,000 francs over and above the official selling price from a building contractor who had bought a piece of land belonging to the municipality.[12] And the nationalists themselves have in recent years become more and more involved in fraud and extortion, as well as in legitimate businesses.

Electoral fraud has also until recently been commonplace. Until the recent purging of the electoral registers these were notoriously out of date, and stories abound of votes being cast in the name of people who had been dead many years. A more authenticated case is given by Charles Santoni[13], according to whom the commune of San Damiano, with 165 registered electors, gave 5998 votes to the

Gaullist candidate in the 1973 elections. And, not so long ago, there were means of making sure that people voted the right way. Santoni[14] and Lenclud[15] both maintain that voting was hardly ever secret, for 'emprunter l'isoloir signifie avoir quelque chose à cacher.'[16]

There would also be other pressures on electors. Gil[17] mentions some of these – from the peasant who needed a birth certificate and would find all manner of obstacles put in his way unless he voted 'correctly', to physical threats.

"Between 1983 and 1988 the number of armed robberies increased by 120%"

Electoral fraud has become less prevalent since the abolition of proxy voting and the updating of electoral registers, but there are still authenticated cases of fraud. The 1986 elections were noted for the fraudulent misuse of proxy votes, the mayor of Bastia being sent for trial, and the original ballot being quashed by the Constitutional Council. [18]

All these features of political life in modern Corsica echo aspects of 'the old order' of clanism and patronage, but the most obvious legacy of the past is the notion of revenge and the high level of violence.

VIOLENCE IN CORSICA TODAY

Corsica has witnessed a significant increase in crimes of violence in recent years. Between 1983 and 1988 the number of armed robberies increased by 120% to reach 235 in 1988.[19] After a decrease, a further sharp increase (29%) took place in 1992 over the previous year to reach 260 incidents.[20] What is particularly worrying in this increase is that the police believe many of these to be 'copy cat' robberies by young, unemployed people imitating the Bastia criminal gang 'Brise de mer', which exerts a certain romantic appeal on these youngsters. More seriously, the number of murders in Corsica has increased dramatically. Forty individuals were murdered in 1992 compared to 23 in 1991,[21] 28 in 1990 and 14 in 1989.[22] In 1994 there were 40 murders and 22 between January and August 1995.[23] These figures put Corsica way above the French national murder rate and close to the notoriously violent city of Marseille. The police believe that four fifths of the murders on the island are revenge killings or 'settling of accounts' between rival criminal gangs. Without an all-embracing criminal hierarchy on the lines of the Sicilian Mafia, Corsica's criminal underworld would appear to be segmented into a number of separate gangs which frequently come into conflict with each other over territorial claims and areas of influence. This was how the police explained the deaths of two petty criminals, Dominique Paoli and Jean-Baptiste Andreani, shot dead on 21 December 1990 at Propriano.[24] Christian Natali, too, met his death in a hail of bullets in 1988, widely suspected of being responsible for the death of Robert Morenas in August 1985. Natali's father and brother had also been shot dead in previous incidents.[25]

Violent deaths and destruction of property may also be attributed to the widespread extortion rackets operating in Corsica. Business people who do not pay protection money are likely to find their property destroyed by bombs. In 1995 there were over 600 explosions destroying property, and 442 between January and the end of October 1996.[26] Many of these explosions are the work of the nationalist FLNC, but it is impossible to say which are attributable to nationalist activity and which to everyday racketeers. Indeed the leading nationalist Pierre Poggioli believes that many perpetrators of bomb outrages leave nationalist graffiti even when they have nothing to do with those organisations.[27] According to one source[28], only 20% of the 600 plus explosions in 1995 were claimed by nationalist organisations.

Violence also takes the form of family quarrels. The old style vendetta is widely held to have died out in modern Corsicans[29], although an apocryphal tale tells of a vendetta in the 1960s which started when a donkey strayed onto somebody else's land. And yet family quarrels still end up in bloodshed. In January 1993 Tony Santoni was killed by a cousin from another branch of the family in a quarrel over land going back a number of generations.[30]

Victims of violence are frequently public figures. The violent deaths of Charles Grossetti, mayor of Grosseto-Pugna, in September 1990, of Lucien Tirroloni, President of the Regional Chamber of Agriculture in December 1990, and of Paul Mariani, mayor of Soveria in January 1991 are cases in point. The motives for these murders are unclear, but an article in *Le Monde*[31] implies, without saying so directly, that there may be a connection between the murder of Grossetti and property development (the mayor is responsible for granting planning permission). Soveria, where Mariani was mayor, was said to have been riven with personal animosities. This of course is speculation, but these murders have all the appearance of 'revenge' killings.

The situation became so acute during 1992 that the police presence was increased by 10% to 2200, or four times the ratio of police to population in Marseille[32] and the Bastia Public Prosecutor was prompted to say that the rule of law no longer held in Corsica 'L'état de droit ne règne plus en Corse'[33]. In 1995 there were ten times as many police per head of population in Corsica as on the mainland, yet only 6.84% of crimes were detected.[34]

Clearly, then, violence is endemic in modern Corsica, more so than elsewhere in France, and this propensity to violence is clearly seen in the activities of the nationalist movement.

VIOLENCE AND THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

Violence has played a significant role in all nationalist movements. As in Brittany, the Basque region and other areas where nationalist movements exist, these may be divided into legal, non-violent organisations on the one hand, and clandestine groups on the other who perpetrate acts of sabotage against property and who, in Corsica particularly, do not shrink from taking life. In Corsica, however, the degree of violence is far and away much greater than in other regions. Perhaps the most celebrated incident in the folklore of Corsican nationalism was the occupation of a vineyard hostel at Aleria in August 1975 by members of *Azione Rinascita Corsa* led by Edmond Simeoni. Two gendarmes lost their lives in the ensuing fracas, and the occupiers were tried and imprisoned by the State Security Court in Paris.

A similar occupation took place at Aghione in 1976 and in 1980 the *Unione di u Populu Corsu* (UPC), the successor to the APC, kidnapped three members of an anti-nationalist movement at Bastelica and held them in the Hotel Fesch at Ajaccio. Since that date the UPC, which is still one of the main legal nationalist movements, has confined its activity to non-violent electioneering within the law.

The majority of violent incidents in the nationalist cause have been the responsibility of the clandestine *Front de Libération Nationale de la Corse* (FLNC). Formed in 1976 it issued a declaration *A liberta o a morte* (Liberty or Death)[35], in which its aims for an autonomous Corsica were expounded. Straight from the beginning, the FLNC saw itself as an army fighting against French colonialism: 'Tout patriote doit être un soldat de la lutte de libération nationale décidée à vaincre l'ennemi'.[36] Its members wear battledress and SAS type hoods as a sort of uniform. It appears to be organised into a number of territorial units within a strict hierarchy. And, like other armies, it seems to believe that an army has the right to kill and destroy. The FLNC targets particularly what it sees as 'symbols of French colonialism' – radio stations, public buildings, tax offices, and particularly tourist installations.

It is impossible to give a detailed account of all the outrages for which the FLNC has been held responsible. Among the most noteworthy in the early days of the movement were the destruction of an Air France Boeing at Ajaccio in August 1976 and acts of sabotage against a military base at Solenzara in 1977 and a TV relay station in August 1977. The number of explosions attributed to it escalated from 298 in 1975, to a high of 806 in 1982. After the 1988 elections the FLNC declared a truce and the number of explosions fell to 224 in 1988, 222 in 1989 and 197 in 1990[37], and then rose again to 367 in 1992. Over 600 were recorded in 1995 and over 440 between January and October 1996.[38] A characteristic of the FLNC's operations has been the simultaneous explosion of a number of devices, the so-called 'nuits bleues', in various parts of the island, indicating a high degree of organisation and technical expertise. Since 1990, however, the clandestine nationalist movement has become fragmented and it has become more difficult to identify which movement is responsible for what explosions.

From the early 1980s the FLNC's strategy of violence was turned towards human targets. Non-Corsicans residing in the island found themselves the subject of extortion demands which the FLNC called its 'impôt révolutionnaire'. And in 1983 a high-ranking civil servant, Pierre-Jean Massimi was shot by the FLNC in revenge for the disappearance and presumed death of FLNC member Alain Orsoni. That same year an FLNC commando managed to penetrate into the prison at Ajaccio and kill two inmates whom they also held responsible for Orsoni's disappearance. A number of other individuals have met their deaths at the hands of the FLNC, notably Dr Lafay, a well known anti-nationalist from Corte. As with bomb explosions, however, it is difficult to know which assassinations are the work of the FLNC and like organisations, and which are not.

Over the last six or seven years the situation of the clandestine movements has become more confused due to the fragmentation of the nationalist movement as a whole. Attitudes to the reform of the region's institutions in 1990, which conferred a greater degree of autonomy on the island, although still a long way short of self rule, brought about a split in the FLNC. In September 1990 a splinter group *Resistenza* broke away after the FLNC had announced it was willing to collaborate with other 'progressive forces'. *Resistenza* declared that it would carry on the 'armed struggle' against colonial forces and in August 1992 carried out the partial destruction of a tourist complex on the island of Cavallo.[39] In November 1990 the FLNC rump split into two factions – the hard-line *FLNC Canal historique* and the more moderate *FLNC Canal habituel* which announced a freeze on its military activities.[40]

Further fragmentation occurred in May 1996 when yet another group split from *Canal habituel*, calling itself simply *FLNC*. Each of these clandestine groups is linked to legal nationalist movements, in the same way as Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland is widely held to be the legal shop-window of the IRA. *Resistenza* is linked to the legal ANC (*Accolta Nazionale Corsa*), *Canal historique* is represented by *Cuncolta*, *Canal habituel* by the MPA (*Movimentu per l'Autodeterminazione*) and the new FLNC by a new legal movement calling itself *Corsica Viva*. Of the clandestine movements it is *Canal historique* which appears to be the most active and, as if to demonstrate once again its formidable organisational and military capabilities, carried out a spectacular 'nuit bleue' in the early morning of 2 February 1997, with the destruction of over sixty banks, public buildings and houses within one hour all over the island.[41] *Canal habituel*, on the other hand, became less and less active until it disbanded in January 1997.[42]

"The number of explosions attributed to it escalated from 298 in 1975, to a high of 806 in 1982"

One of the consequences of this fragmentation has been public feuding between the groups, which has become a significant characteristic of Corsican nationalism in the 1990s. The feuding stems from the collapse of the temporary football stand at Bastia in May 1992 and its resultant deaths referred to earlier. It was widely held that the manager of Bastia football club, Jean-François Filippi, had colluded with the builder of the stand to cut corners and reduce costs.[43] Moreover, it was believed that Filippi was being protected by *Bastia Securita*, a security organisation closely linked to the FLNC *Canal historique*. When Robert Sozzi, a young activist within the *FLNC Canal historique*, denounced the protection afforded to Filippi, he was shot and killed.[44]

Thus began a whole series of tit-for-tat murders, bearing a remarkable resemblance to the vendettas of former times, culminating in July 1996 in a spectacular car bomb explosion in the middle of Bastia which killed two passers-by, and seriously injured a senior member of Cuncolta.[45]

The violence of nationalist movements has continued for many years and shows no sign of abating, despite the occasional declaration of ceasefires. Indeed, since 1990 it has intensified, probably as a direct result of the fragmentation of the movement. Not only have we seen the development of internecine feuding, but the spread of nationalist activity to mainland France (in October 1996 there were two explosions claimed by the FLNC – one at Aix-en-Provence, the other at the Town Hall of Bordeaux, where ex-Prime Minister Alain Juppé is mayor)[46].

CONCLUSION

The old order in Corsica was characterised by the clan system and consequent manipulation of the political process, and by notions of honour and violence. Is it possible to relate the old order to the Corsica of today? It could be said that the propensity to violence is directly linked to the notions of self-help and gun culture outlined in the first part of this article. We might also be tempted to link the revenge killings, the so-called 'règlements de compte' of today with the feuding and exaggerated sense of honour which Stephen Wilson describes. According to one story, which is almost certainly apocryphal, a customer in a restaurant who complained that there was too much salt in the rabbit dish he was eating was killed by the chef who claimed that this complaint was an attack upon his honour. According to the tale, the court accepted the chef's 'justification' and he was acquitted.

We could also draw a parallel between clanism and patronage on the one hand, and the corruption which we have pointed to above. However, commonplace as corruption may be in Corsica, we must beware of making Corsica out to be a special case, for corruption and patronage are endemic in all societies and Corsica is by no means exceptional in this. Nor is Corsica special in having leaders who retain their positions over many decades. This is, in fact, a characteristic of French politics. Herriot was mayor of Lyon for over 50 years, while his successor, Pradel, held that position for over 20 years. Moreover, the holding of a number of posts, the 'cumul des mandats', is commonplace among French politicians from all regions. What is peculiar about Corsica is the quasi-hereditary nature of some posts.

What does mark Corsica out from other regions is the *level* of violence. Can this be attributed to the island's violent past? It may be so, but it would, perhaps, be too facile a conclusion to draw. Self-help, the clan and, to some extent, the vendetta were instruments of social order in which each person's position, duties and rights were clear. What we have witnessed in recent years is a breakdown of order. Corsican society no longer regulates itself, and it is likely that this, rather than a historical propensity to violence, is the major contributory factor in the increasing recourse to indiscriminate violence in that region.

NOTES

1. Wilson, S. (1988) *Feuding, Conflict and Banditry in Nineteenth Century Corsica*. Cambridge University Press, p. 93.
2. The Guardian, 9.2.1993.
3. Wilson, *op. cit.*
4. Wilson, Chapter 1.
5. Wilson, Chapter 4.
6. Wilson, Chapter 12.
7. Wilson, p 359.
8. Wilson, Chapter 11.
9. *EC Commission Yearbook of Regional Statistics*. Luxembourg 1989.
10. *The Times*, 9.11.31 *et seq.*
11. *L'Express* 27.7.90.
12. *Le Monde* 14.3.92.
13. Santoni, C. (1976) Les masques du discours politique en Corse. *Les Temps Modernes*, April.
14. *ibid.*
15. Lenclud, G. (1988) Patronage electoral et culture politique en Corse. *Revue Française de Science Politique*, October.
16. Lenclud, *op. cit.*
17. Gil, J. (1976) La Puissance d'un peuple. *Les Temps Modernes*, April.
18. *Le Monde* 5.12.86 and 31.7.86.
19. *Le Monde* 29.11.90.
20. *Le Monde* 3.10.92.
21. *Le Monde* 18.1.93.
22. Frémy, D. and Frémy, M. (1992) *Quid*. Laffont, Paris.
23. *Le Point* 5.8.95.
24. *Le Monde* 24.12.90.
25. *Le Monde* 29.7.88.
26. *Le Point* 2.11.96.
27. *Le Monde* 3.10.93.
28. *Nouvel Observateur* 18–24.1.96.
29. *The Guardian* 9.2.93.
30. *Le Monde* 18.1.93.
31. *Le Monde* 24.12.90.
32. *The Guardian* 21.8.92.
33. *Le Monde* 11.1.93.
34. *Nouvel Observateur* 24–30.8.95.
35. Manifesto published in *Liberation* 6.5.76.
36. *ibid.*
37. Frémy, D. and Frémy, M. (1992) *op cit.*
38. *Le Point* 2.11.96.
39. *Le Point* 15.8.92.
40. *Le Monde* 10.1.91
41. *Nice Matin* 3.2.97
42. *Nice Matin* 3.2.97.
43. *Nouvel Observateur* 5–11.1.95.
44. The protection given to Filippi did not do him any good, as he himself was murdered in December 1994, just before he was due to stand trial for criminal negligence. Eight defendants were subsequently convicted in April 1995 (*Financial Times* 1.4.95).
45. *Le Point* 6.7.96.
46. *The Guardian* 7.10.96.

Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 27–30

News and Notes

ALL can do it: Home to Home Exchanges

This was the heading of the latest circular to go out to all ALL members in the Yorkshire Branch to tell them of the success of the first ALL sponsored exchange party to Westphalia during the Easter holidays. On this occasion 81 Yorkshire pupils spent two weeks in Germany in the homes of partners organised for them by the ALL Committee and their German counterparts. The German pupils come to Yorkshire at the end of July.

At almost the same time the first ALL sponsored exchange with the North of France (Académie de Lille) will arrive in Yorkshire. More than 120 Yorkshire pupils are to be hosts for 15 days to a similar group of French teenagers. British and French students will return to France together in early August to complete the second leg of the Exchange All the partnerships have been set up jointly between the ALL Organising Committee and the French Comité des Echanges Lille-Yorkshire.

Fiftieth anniversary

Although this is the first year ALL have been responsible for the organisation of the Exchanges on the British side, the year 1997 is a remarkable one since it marks the half century of exchanges between the schools of Yorkshire and the Académie de Lille. The Président fondateur of the organisation, Monsieur Yves Lesage OBE, will be visiting Yorkshire as he has done every year since he led the first exchange in July 1947. More on this in the next issue.

How to contact

Although it may be too late to enroll pupils on the Exchange for this year, it is not too soon to consider plans for next year. The ALL Organising Committee is anxious to expand the number of participating schools. We know this year that more than 100 pupils in France and Germany have been disappointed because British partners could not be found for them. Schools in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and even further afield are invited to make enquiries about participating in the scheme. We can accommodate one pupil or twenty. We also have a number of requests from French *collèges* and *lycées* for firm linkages with a school in Britain. Preparation for the Westphalia Exchange needs to begin in October. For the French Exchange, February and March are vital months. Any member wanting preliminary details is invited to contact at any time the Organising Secretary for ALL Exchanges, Mrs Denise Driscoll at Leeds Metropolitan University. Direct Line 0113 283 7441 or by email at D.Driscoll@lmu.ac.uk

French and the Internet

We hope to offer as a regular feature from now on details of material available on the Internet which is usable in French classes at all levels. We shall not simply be concerned with what is still a minority of people who have their own access to the Internet, nor with activities only possible in a computer laboratory. What we are interested in is what is downloadable from one free standing machine to a printer and eventually to a photocopier for class use.

The Editor will be delighted to receive useful www addresses to pass on to readers to experiment with. Have you tried "Infoseek France" or "The World Language Pages" (available at http://www.livjm.ac.uk/language/)? This is material put out by Liverpool John Moores University. *CILT Information Bulletin* No.7 gives some useful pointers, e.g. School exchanges and projects at http://www.tcns.co.uk/info/aede3e.html. This includes information on funding for educational projects and a school partnership matching service.

There is also what is advertised as "the on-line, in-depth, non-stop resource centre for French language and culture". Try http://www.campus.btcom/Campus-World/pub/FranceALC/. Further information on this at email address: FranceALC@mail.ambafrance.org.uk.

There is also: http://web.culture.fr. If you feel like trying a French chat line in Quebec try the list name "causerie" and subscribe to: listserv@inrs-urb.uquebec.ca. No guarantees offered and no responsibility taken.

Addresses come and go very rapidly and updates are urgently needed. If you have found a good site to provide usable classroom material please pass it on to the Editor (email address given below.) If in France this summer look out for useful directories and *Pages Jaunes*. In the Marabout series "Les Best-sellers de l'informatique" you will find *Le Guide des Meilleures Adresses de l'Internet* by Miguel Mennig gives "les meilleurs sites francophones" such as Le Louvre at http://www.louvre.fr/ (L'actualité du

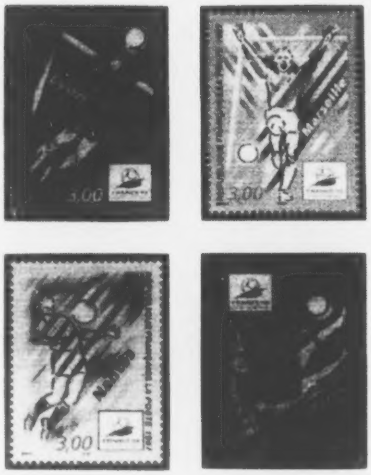
Louvre, les manifestations en cours et de très nombreuses reproductions des oeuvres.), or even Paroles de chansons at http://www.mcc.ac.uk:80/Lyrics (Ce serveur vous permet de retrouver les paroles de quantité de chansons de groupes ou chanteurs rock).

Any surfer with addresses and suggestions to pass on to readers is asked to contact the Editor by email:

asmalley@premier.co.uk.

A much longer list will appear in the December issue.

Philinfo: le mensuel des timbres de la poste!



Philinfo is a relatively recent (No.1 January 1997) and highly colourful A5 publication put out by le Service National des Timbres-poste et de la Philatélie. It contains a wealth of information, all in the target language, on stamps old and new and on the themes the stamps commemorate. Interest in stamps leads to a broadening of all horizons. "Je n'ai pas trouvé d'activités humaines qui n'aient pas été traitées par le timbre." (Jean-François Brun, Président de l'Académie de philatélie, expert de réputation mondiale, il est l'auteur de *Faux et truqués*).

This well presented small format periodical of approximately 40 pages, now appearing in colour monthly, will provide regular eye-catching updates for *Actualités* notice boards. The short articles – usually only one side of A5 – all splendidly illustrated, will provide excellent reading comprehension material on a broad front – Le timbre et la protection de la nature, Europa 1997 Perrault et le Chat Botté, Coupe du Monde de Football, Les Journées de la lettre de la tablette d'argile à l'écran de l'ordinateur and so on.

For a subscription to this new venture write to the *Service Philatélique de la Poste*, at its Paris address: 18 rue François-Bonvin, 75758 Paris cedex 15. Try it on the Internet at www.Laposte.Fr. The annual subscription for the monthly magazine and "notice philatéliques en 4 langues" is 100 FF. For the magazine only the price is 75 FF.

La Villette: cité des sciences et de l'industrie

Readers may remember a feature we did on la Villette in the June 1995 number (pp 2–8). We were strongly in favour of a school visit which could be tailored to any age group. It would be good to hear from any colleagues who have attempted such a school visit. Please contact the Editor if you could write a small piece on your school's experiences. Photographs are welcome.

What may be of interest to members still considering the possibility of such a visit is a document recently received from La Cité:

> "Nous vous invitons à venir découvrir la Cité des Sciences avec vos élèves pendant une journée. Pour vous aider à organiser cette visite, des suggestions sont à votre disposition dans les fiches thématiques de notre supplément 'Actualités No.2.'
>
> Si vous souhaitez être informé régulièrement de nos publications pédagogiques et notamment si vous êtes membre ou responsable d'une association d'enseignants, nous vous invitons à nous retourner ce coupon-réponse."

Merci de nous retourner ce coupon-réponse, dès réception, par courrier:: Vité des Sciences, service Promotion Education, 75930 Paris cedex 19, France, ou par télécopie: (00 33 1) 40 05 77 69

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téléphone: ______________ télécopie: ______________

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Ouverture de la Bibliothèque nationale de France

Depuis le 20 décembre 96, la Bibliothèque nationale de France a ouvert ses portes au 11 Quai François Mauriac dans le 13e arrondissement de Paris.

Conditions et mode d'accès

Elle accueille dans les salles de lecture du Haut-de-Jardin tous les publics âgés de plus de 18 ans (ou titulaires du baccalauréat), pour un droit d'entrée de 20 francs. La carte annuelle est de 200 francs, le tarif réduit de 100 francs.

Les salles de lecture sont ouvertes du mardi au samedi de 10 heures à 19 heures, le dimanche de 12 heures à 18 heures. Des visites sont organisées. Une exposition «Tous les Savoirs du Monde» est ouverte à tous (droit d'entrée, mais exonération pour les scolaires, accompagnés de leur enseignant).

Les moyens pour accéder à la Bibliothèque sont divers: la Gare d'Austerlitz est à 7 minutes à pied, la Gare de Lyon à 20 minutes, le métro le plus proche: Quai de la Gare est à 5 minutes, les lignes d'autobus 62 et 89 vous amènent aux deux entrées de la Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Les collections

Elle offre des collections encyclopédiques organisées en cinq départements: audiovisuel, sciences et techniques, droit, économie, politique, littérature et art, philosophie, histoire, sciences de l'homme. Une salle est consacrée à la presse d'actualité, une salle à la recherche bibliographique.

La Francophonie

Les littératures francophones sont présentées en salle H, (département Littérature et Art).

Pour bien comprendre ce que recouvre la francophonie à la Bibliothèque nationale de France, au niveau Haut-de-Jardin, il faut savoir que ce fonds en libre accès s'inscrit dans l'histoire de la Bibliothèque nationale de France et a été constitué à partir des bibliographies nationales et internationales, avec l'aide des professionnels des bibliothèques, et les conseils d'universitaires spécialistes des littératures francophones. Les 3500 volumes qui sont présentés en Haut-de-Jardin constituent la partie visible des richesses du Fonds patrimonial de la Bibliothèque, dans le domaine des littératures francophones. Ce fonds patrimonial est à la disposition des chercheurs à Richelieu et sera en 1998 à leur disposition, à Tolbiac en Rez-de-Jardin.

Le secteur des littératures francophones à la Bibliothèque nationale de France regroupe les grandes zones geographiques traditionnelles: Afrique Noire, Amérique du Nord, Asie, Belgique, Caraïbes, Maghreb, Océan Indien, Proche-Orient, Suisse. À l'intérieur de chaque zone, on retrouve des ouvrages généraux sur la littérature, les auteurs majeurs, des études sur les œuvres et les auteurs, un échantillonnage le plus équilibré possible de la production éditoriale récente, et de nombreux périodiques. En un mot une vitrine des richesses accumulées, et continuellement entretenues, de la Bibliothèque nationale de France dans ce secteur francophone est offerte au public du Haut-de-Jardin.

Lettres du Monde

ou comment correspondre entre étudiants du monde?

En mai 1995, la Mutuelle nationale des étudiants de France (MNEF) a lancé l'opération «Lettres du Monde», une campagne de correspondre francophone entre les étudiants français et étudiants étrangers, en partenariat avec le ministère de la Culture et de la Francophonie, les CROUS (Centres régionaux des œuvres universitaires et sociales) et l'AUPELF-UREF (Agence francophone pour l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche). Pour échanger des idées, des informations, connaître le pays, le peuple et la vie d'un étudiant d'un pays francophone (Cambodge, Cameroun, Liban, Laos, Madagascar, Québec-Canada, Roumanie, Viêt-nam), la MNEF et les CROUS ont diffusé des affiches et des cartes postales auprès des étudiants français, les invitant à correspondre avec un étudiant étranger. La réception de leurs lettres et de leurs cartes postales s'est faite à la MNEF. Elles ont ensuite été remises à l'AUPELF-UREF qui en assuré la distribution par l'intermédiaire des ses bureaux régionaux et d'enseignants francophones. L'échange se poursuit ensuite directement entre les correspondants.

Cette campagne a été menée par les bureaux étudiants de la MNEF. La campagne «Lettres du Monde» a déjà suscité plus de 10,000 demandes de correspondances émanant d'étudiants et de lycéens de toute la France. Les lycéens représentent 35% des demandeurs et les filles plus de 60%. En moyenne, les étudiants souhaitent deux à trois correspondants. Les pays les plus demandés sont, dans l'ordre: le Canada (Québec), le Cambodge, le Viêt-nam, Madagascar, la Roumanie, le Liban, Haïti, le Laos at le Cameroun.

Avec Lettres du Monde, la nouveauté réside dans cette solidarité étudiante que la MNEF met en œuvre avec des jeunes francophones des cinq continents. Dans les lettres ou les cartes postales que les étudiants adressent à la MNEF pour participer à cette campagne, beaucoup expriment leur satisfaction devant cette initiative (entièrement gratuite).

Devant son succès, la campagne «Lettre du Monde» va être relancée en mars 1997, sous cette forme, en privilégiant l'Afrique francophone. Nom de la campagne: Cart'Afrique. A l'avenir, la MNEF – et ses partenaires, dont la FIPF – deviendrait une «boite à lettres» grâce à laquelle les étudiants français pourraient obtenir des correspondants étrangers. Dans le même esprit, MNEF-Solidarité et ses partenaires étudiants (organisations nationales, associations d'étudiants étrangers) ont le projet de créer la Fédération internationale des étudiants francophones. Lors de sa présentation, cette initiative a été fortement encouragée par Mme Margie Sudre, Secrétaire d'Etat à la Francophonie. À suivre...

Pour tout contact: MNEF/LETTRES DU MONDE, BP 100 - 16 avenue Raspail, 94250 Gentilly, France. Tél: 01 49 08 81 55; Fax: 01 49 08 81 05

ADOS: Le plaisir de lire

A l'occasion du Salon du livre, une étude sur les 14–18 ans et la lecture a été réalisée. Que lisez-vous?

Contrairement à une idée souvent répandue, les jeunes de 14 à 18 ans lisent et achètent des livres. Selon une enquête réalisée par le magazine "Livres hebdo" à l'occasion du Salon du livre à Paris, plus de 80% d'entre eux ont lu au moins quatre livres au cours des six derniers mois et plus de dix durant l'année.

Si écouter de la musique reste le loisir préféré, les livres arrivent en deuxième position dans les dépenses personnelles. Près de la moitié d'entre eux achètent eux-mêmes leurs livres, ils dépensent en moyenne pour cela 210 francs par an.

Pourquoi lit-on? Par obligation scolaire bien sûr, mais aussi par goût personnel, par envie d'apprendre.

Karine, 17 ans, élève de seconde au collège Robert-Schumann à Reims (Ardennes), avoue une vraie curiosité. La lecture occupe une large place dans ses loisirs à côté du sport et de la musique.

Karine ne dévore-t-elle pas jusqu'à 100 pages par jour en moyenne?

> "J"aime lire, découvrir de nouveaux écrivains. Lorsque je vais à la bibliothèque, je choisis un livre un peu au hasard. S'il m'a plu, j'ai tendance à lire d'autres ouvrages du même auteur. Par exemple, Marcel Pagnol, Colette, Françoise Mallet-Joris."

Quels types d'ouvrages lit-on? La bande dessinée arrive en tête, en particulier chez les garçons comme le montre cette même enquête. Mais les romans d'amour et d'aventure arrivent en deuxième position, devant la littérature classique, les livres policier et la science-fiction. Pour sa part, Karine a une nette préférence pour les romans contemporains, mais elle s'intéresse aussi aux romans policiers, aux livres d'histoire.

Ouvrir son esprit

Anas, 16 ans, éléve au lycée Janson-de-Sailly (Paris) aime les grands classiques de la littérature française comme Guy de Maupassant, elle a aussi un faible pour les nouvelles et les pièces de théâtre. Elle place la lecture parmi ses loisirs préférés "Pour le simple plaisir de lire" dit-elle, "et parce que la lecture vous ouvre l'esprit, c'est aussi un formidable moyen d'apprendre, c'est indispensable pour la culture générale." Karine estime pour sa part que les lectures personnelles peuvent servir en classe. "Je me suis aperçue qu'en lisant beaucoup, j'avais plus de facilité pour m'exprimer, ce qui m'a permis d'avoir de meilleures notes en français." Sans aucun doute une excellente raison de prendre le temps de lire!

Primary French: Some Fundamental Policy Choices

Keith Sharpe
Canterbury Christ Church College

Primary French continues to rise phoenix-like from the ashes to which it was consigned over twenty years ago by the influential NFER, which concluded that to most intents and purposes it was not worth doing. The four main factors behind this unusual, if not unprecedented, case of educational resurrection are the accumulated literature of critique of the reliability of the NFER findings, the shift in general foreign language teaching methodology towards a predominant concern with communicative competence, the strengthening of utilitarian values in educational policy, and the changed world, and particularly changed Europe, in which we now live. As we approach the millennium there is widespread accepance that primary French and primary modern languages in general are 'a good thing'. The phoenix is alive and well. It is, however, not yet kicking (flying?) in the sense of being officially recognised as a legitimate subject for inclusion in the sacred pantheon of the National Curriculum, although there are grounds for hope in the pronouncements on the issue by the political party which has just come into government.

'Official' approval in principle of the idea of modern languages in the primary school has been around for some time (National Curriculum MFL Working Party, Dearing), but the major impediment has always been a perceived lack of 'relevant expertise' in the primary base. In common parlance this translates as 'there aren't enough MFL teachers to meet NC statutory requirements in the secondary phase so to add MFLs to the KS1/KS2 curriculum would only make a bad situation worse'. It is, however, important to realise that this view is predicated on a series of assumptions about primary MFL teaching, in particular that:

1. the aims of primary MFL teaching are essentially the same as secondary MFL teaching;
2. appropriate methods of teaching MFL in secondary and primary classrooms are essentially the same;
3. effective primary MFL teaching requires a high level of mastery in the language taught;
4. primary MFL teaching is a specialist or semi-specialist activity.

All of these assumptions need rigorous scrutiny in the light of the experience since 1990 of schools, LEAs and the Scottish national pilot project where primary French and other MFLs have been taught.

Keith Sharpe will develop these ideas in an article to appear in the December issue of *Francophonie*.

Contributions

Could *you* write a short piece for *Francophonie*, perhaps to figure as part of a joint article compiled by the Editor on a topic of wide interest? Below you will find a large number of topics which we hope to cover over the next two years. Contributions, long or short, will be very welcome.

- F.E. and adult courses in French. The special problems of teaching French to adults on a one night a week basis. How far can you get? What private reading material goes down well?
- Using TV5 (on the cable) and other French satellite broadcast material. How to adapt it. Who to use it with.
- Experience of students attending holiday French courses in the UK and abroad. Are they value for money?
- Comment surfer sur le WWW. Les forums en français. Code de Bonne Conduite sur l'Internet.
- Running a correspondence scheme between schools – by email or by snail mail.
- Fostering creative writing in French at any level.
- An up-date (especially in French) on any Francophone country.
- The state of modern French – slang, jargon, advertisers' language.
- Names in France. What first names are in vogue? What is now dated? Who are the equivalents of Kaz's, Shaz's and Tracy's?
- Bilingualism. The study of a French child/children raised in England. Preserving the French and preventing English contamination.
- Sport, especially football. We have never been offered a straightforward article in French on the French Football League. Likewise an article on the Tour de France, about which surprisingly little has been written anywhere.
- An up-to-date price list. Readers often want to give exact prices for number practice or in role playing – cost of a stamp to the UK, petrol per litre, newspapers, drinks, sweets.
- Articles on food and wine. Are you on friendly terms with a producer in a little known *appellation*?
- Any quick tips of 50 to 100 words which can usefully be passed on to other readers.
- Teaching number – number games of any kind.

We hope, of course, to maintain a regular outlet for expression on literary works, political and social institutions.

The general aim is to produce material which is of interest and relevance to teachers of French at all levels and, wherever possible, provide scope for photocopiable material in French which can be given, say, to A level students for private study.

If any of the above strikes a chord or if you feel you would like to kick an idea around before putting your thoughts down, do contact the Editor by letter, by email or by telephone.

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Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 31–33

Books and materials received

The following books and materials have been received from the publishers. Titles marked * are available for review by telephoning 0113 267 9258, after 6 pm.

* TALKING BUSINESS FRENCH FOR (G)NVQ

Margaret Mitchell and Sandra Truscott

Stanley Thornes. 1996. Coursebook: ISBN 0-7487 2108, 8 £8.99; R and A file: ISBN 0 7487 2111 8, £70.00 +VAT; Cassettes: ISBN 0 7487 i2109 6, £17.99 +VAT

Provides students with a complete introduction to French and assumes no prior knowledge. Language is practised in authentic business contexts. The file contains photocopiable worksheets for extra practice in all four skill areas.

* LONGMAN HOMEWORK HANDBOOKS: KEY STAGE 3 FRENCH

Alasdair McKeane

Longman. October 1996. ISBN 0 582 29331 6. £7.99

Specific help for Key Stage 3, self-check exercises, etc. A tape is available, but not sent for review.

* CONFORT 2: SPIRALE 2 HOMEWORK AND COVER-LESSON PACK

Véronique Bussolin, Jacqueline Jenkins and Barry Jones

Hodder and Stoughton. ISBN 0 340 65874 6. £25.99

A pack 50 photocopiable worksheets designed for use as cover lessons and or homework. There is vocabulary support and also a marking scheme.

* SPIRALE 4 PHOTOCOPY MASTERS AND ASSESSMENT FILE

Marie-Thérèse Bougard, Jacqueline Jenkins, Barry Jones and Amanda Hainger

Hodder and Stoughton. ISBN 0 340 61874 4. £59.99 +VAT

Over 100 pages of photocopiable worksheets, puzzles, games and answer grids, with assessment in all four skill areas, to accompany part 4 of this 11–16 course.

* INFOFRANCE

Graham Bishop

John Murray. 1996. ISBN 0 7195 8500 7. £39.99

A new photocopiable reading resource, based on the daily newspaper *InfoMatin*, providing differentiated practice in understanding and responding to written texts. There are also opportunities for oral work.

* COMPO 2000

Rod Hares and Geneviève Elliott

Hodder and Stoughton. Second edition 1997. ISBN 0 340 67398 7. £4.99

Fully revised and updated, Compo 2000 provides guidance on essay writing for A level students and undergraduates.

* GRAMEX FRENCH

Hodder and Stoughton, 1997. From the Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) materials. ISBN 0 340 66950 0. Single user price £75.00 +VAT. Network licence £150.00 +VAT. Manual and floppy disk. IBM PC compatible. System requirements: 80386 or higher PC with 3 inch high density floppy disk drive; Microsoft Windows 3.1 or higher; hard disk with at least 1MB of free disk space; VGA or higher resolution monitor; at least 4MB RAM (8 MB recommended)

TELL materials have been conceived and produced as part of the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme. They are created by a consortium of universities and other higher education establishments, led by the CTI Centre for Modern Languages at the University of Hull.

The GramEx program is for post A-level students, re-inforcing essential areas of grammar. Exercises follow a multi -choice gapfill format. Further information from the TELL Consortium, telephone 01482 465872, or email CTI.lang@hull.ac.uk.

* MODERN FRENCH GRAMMAR

Margaret Lang and Isabelle Perez

Routledge. 1996. Reference guide, ISBN 0 415 09852 1. £14.99; Workbook, ISBN 0 415 12093 4. No price given

For A-level students and beyond.

* PRACTICE IN FRENCH GRAMMAR AT 14–16

Anneli McLachlan

Collins Educational. 1997. ISBN 0 00 320046 9. Price not given

Photocopiable worksheets for improving students' use of grammar with special emphasis on the examinations at 16+. An accompanying cassette reinforces the grammar points.

* EN ROUTE VERS L'EUROPE: FRENCH FOR LIFE, WORK AND STUDY

Elspeth Broady and Catrine Carpenter

Hodder and Stoughton. February 1997. Coursebook, ISBN 0 340 64830 9. £13.99. Support book and cassettes, ISBN 0 340 64831 7. £20.00 +VAT

Post-GCSE material for classwork or individual study, using a wide variety of materials, including authentic texts, dialogues, lectures, interviews, simulated radio programmes, etc.

*** FRENCH VOCABULARY BUILDER**
Harriette Lanzer and Anna Lise Gordon
OUP. ISBN 0 19 912207 5. £3.50
Reference source and revision aid for GCSE and other first examinations.

*** COMMENT DIT-ON....? A NEW VOCABULARY FOR GCSE FRENCH**
Paul Humberstone
Hodder and Stoughton. 1996.
ISBN 0 340 65554 2. £2.99
Comprehensive coverage of the vocabulary required for the new examination syllabuses.

*** TALK NOW: LEARN FRENCH**
Eurotalk. 1997. ISBN 1 862 21003 4. £29.95. Windows + Apple Macintosh CD-ROM
Essential words and phrases for beginners for 12 years and upwards.

*** MULTIMEDIA FLASHCARDS: LEARN FRENCH**
Eurotalk and Heinemann. 1997. ISBN 1 862 21103 5. £24.95. Windows + Apple Macintosh CD-ROM
Minimum system requirements for both disks
Windows compatible, VGA with 256 colours, Sound card (eg. SoundBlaster), 486 processor or above, 8MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, microphone (optional but very useful).
Apple Macintosh colour Macintosh, 68030 processor or above, 8MB RAM, CD-ROM drive, microphone (optional but very useful).
An interactive flash card system to help in basic language teaching. For younger learners. Key stages 1–4.

*** PERSPECTIVES FRANÇAISES**
AVP. 1997. Product code PB7COM3001 5. CD-ROM from the Picturebase series. PC or Acorn single user £69.00. PC or Acorn site licence £139.00.
Key stages 3 and 4. An independent learning package covering the following topics:

La vie de tous les jours
A boire et à manger
Vie privée et vie sociale
Le monde qui nous entoure
Panneaux et écriteaux
Le monde du travail

System requirements: a multimedia PC or compatible, with 386 or higher processor, at least 4MB of RAM but 8MB recommended, 2MB available hard disk space, CD-ROM drive (double speed or higher), audio board and VGA with at least 256 colour display. Microsoft Windows 3.1 or higher, mouse or compatible pointing device, headphones or speakers.

*** TALK TO ME**
Yorkshire International Thomson Multimedia Ltd., and Auralog S.A. (France). 1997. £65.00 + VAT
Interactive CD-ROM for 13 years upwards. Support for preparing oral examinations, with real situations, eg: the airport, the bank and the post office. Exercises and games are also included.
System requirements: IBM PC or compatible, 486 DX minimum. Microsoft Windows 3.1 or above. 8MB RAM memory. 5MB on the hard disk. 16 bit Audio card, Windows compatible. Microphone with speakers or headphones. Double speed CD-ROM drive. SVGA video card and display.

*** FUN WITH FRENCH**
Lynda Carey
The Pentland Press Ltd. 1997.
ISBN 1 85821 448 3. £7.50
A small compilation of puzzles and activities in French for any level.

*** CARTE BLANCHE JUNIOR**
ISBN 0 9514820 3 3. £34.00 per set.
CARTE BLANCHE BASIC
ISBN 0 9514820 0 9. £20.95 per set
CARTE BLANCHE HIGHER
ISBN 1 897609 8 4. £20.95 per set
EUROLAB, ÉDITION FRANÇAISE
ISBN 0 9514820 16 7. £75.00 per set
From Revilo Self-service Language Practice Materials for Schools, PO Box 71, Winchester SO23 8LV
Completely new versions of the popular reading and listening materials.

*** WORKING WITH YOUR FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSISTANT**
Robin Page
MGP International and ALL. 1997. From the Concepts range.
ISBN 0 7487 3031 1. £7.99
Helpful advice on how to make the best possible use of the time and skills of a foreign language assistant, including induction, support, team teaching, etc.

*** THE OXFORD HACHETTE FRENCH DICTIONARY**
OUP and Hachette. 1997.
ISBN 0 19 860067 4. £22.99
New second edition, compiled from electronic databases of current language and containing a new A–Z cultural reference of contemporary France.

*** CAMARADES STAGE 1 (year 7)**
Michèle Deane, Kathy Nourse, Gill Ramage and John Connor
MGP. 1996.
Pupil's book, ISBN 0 7387 2337 4, £6.75
Teacher's book, ISBN 0 7487 2338 2, £19.99
Resource file, ISBN 0 7487 2338 0, £44.00
Cassettes (5), ISBN 0 7487 2340 4, £49.99 +VAT
Flashcards, ISBN 0 7487 2341 2, £37.99 +VAT

*** CAMARADES STAGE 4 (years 10 and 11)**
Gwen Berwick, Sydney Thorne, Julie Green and Jackie Coe. Assessment sections by Caroline Woods and Steven Crossland
MGP. November 1996
Foundation level (jaune)
Pupil's book, ISBN 0 7487 2355 2, £8.99
Teacher's book ISBN 0 7487 2356 0, £19.99
Resource file, ISBN 0 7487 2357 9, £69.99
Cassettes (7), ISBN 0 7487 2358 7, £51.99
Higher level (bleu)
Pupil's book, ISBN 0 7487 1920 2, £8 99
Teacher's book, ISBN 0 7487 1919 9, £19.99
Resource file, ISBN 0 7487 1918 0, £69.99
Cassettes (7), ISBN 0 7487 1917 2, £51.99
CAMARADES is a new four-stage course, featuring a structure and contents carefully formulated to achieve the best possible results with pupils of all ages and abilities. At Stage 4, two parallel pupils' books are provided: *Jaune* is aimed at lower attainers and covers curriculum levels 2–5. *Bleu* contains material to stretch the more able and covers levels 4–7.

Stages 2 and 3 are due to be published in autumn 1997.

CAMBRIDGE FRENCH
General Editors: Kate Beeching, Michael Salter and Christopher Wightwick
CUP. 1997.
A major new course for the revised cur-

riculum. The following stages are now available:

** Stage 1: CARNAVAL.* Bill Pease-Watkin and John Greenway
Livre de l'élève, ISBN 0 521 42545 X. £6.95
Manuel du professeur, ISBN 0 521 42546 8. £35.00
Reprofiches, ISBN 0 521 45956 7. £37.00
Cassettes, ISBN 0 521 42547 6. £35.00 +VAT
Flashcards, ISBN 0 521 42548 4. £45.00
For Year 7

** Stage 4: ÉDITO.* Kate Beechinng and Jemma Buck
Livre de l'élève, ISBN 0 521 42549 2. £8.95
Manuel du professeur, ISBN 0 521 42551 4. £35.00
Reprofiches, ISBN 0 521 42550 6. £37.50
Cassettes, ISBN 0 521 42552 2. £65.00 +VAT
For Year 10

Other stages will be published as follows:
Stage 2: MÉDIATHÈQUE. Mid 1997.
Stage 3: MONDIAL. Mid 1998.
Stage 5: VOIE LIBRE. Mid 1997.

*** SALUT SERGE!**
Sue Finnie
BBC Languages. 1997.
Activity book, ISBN 0563 38744 0. £3.99
C90 Audio cassette, ISBN 0563 58750 5. £4.99 inc VAT
Double Video pack, ISBN 0563 37866 2. £14.99 inc VAT
For children between the ages of 5–10 years.
Based on a new 10×15 minute BBC Scotland TV series and featuring a computer-animated monkey called Serge. UK screening to be confirmed. The double video pack contains the complete TV series.

*** FRENCH LEVELS 1–3 SUPPORT FILE**
Rosi McNab
Heinemann. March 1997. ISBN 0 435 37520 2. £59.95
Photocopiable worksheets and two cassettes providing a wide variety of activities for lower ability learners. Initially for Year 9 pupils but can be used with all pupils who are working at NC levels 1–3. A complement to Avantage 3 but useful with any French course.

*** FRENCH LANGUAGE SKILL SUPPORT FOR KEY STAGE 3**
Britta Eises, Susan De Muth and Ailsa Abbott. Illustrated by Craig Dixon and Simon Downes
The Chalkface Project. March 1997.
Writing ISBN 1 86025 106 4
Speaking ISBN 1 86025 104 8
Reading ISBN 1 86025 105 6
Listening ISBN 1 86025 103 X + cassette
A series of inter-active and inter-related resource materials to develop understanding and confidence in the use of the French language. Photocopiable within the purchasing institution.

*** FRENCH READING ACTIVITIES FOR KS3 / S1–2**
Sue Finnie
ALL. March 1997. From the ALL Classroom Resources Series, edited by Ann Swarbrick. ISBN 0 903846 314. £30.00
Differentiated texts and tasks for NC Levels 1–5. Photocopiable within the purchasing institution. Available from the ALL office, 10% discount for members, add £2 p+p.

*** ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR VOCATIONAL FRENCH (G)NVQ RESOURCES**
J. Thorogood, A. Winchcombe, Nasser Anane, Fiona Kaplan and Nicola Mooney
John Murray. May 1997.
Student's book, ISBN 0 7195 7397 1. £7.99
Cassette and teacher's Resource File available soon
Assessment and practice tasks, set in a broad vocational context.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW FRENCH AND GERMAN PUBLICATIONS
All priced at £3.95, the following are still available for review:

*** VERNE: LE TOUR DU MONDE EN QUATRE-VINGTS JOURS**
Timothy Unwin. ISBN 0 85261 292 3.
*** HUGO: NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS**
Rachel Killick. ISBN 0 85261 395 4.
*** PROUST: A L'OMBRE DES JEUNES FILLES EN FLEURS**
Leighton Hodson. ISBN 0 85261 444 6.
*** ROSTAND: CYRANO DE BERGERAC**
Edward Freeman. ISBN 0 85261 467 5.
*** MICHELET: LA GRANDE MURAILLE**
James Dryhurst. ISBN 0 85261 527 2.
VIAN: L'ÉCUME DES JOURS
David Meakin. ISBN 0 85261 528 0.

*** LITERATURE AND THE RIGHT IN POSTWAR FRANCE**
Nicholas Hewitt
Berg. 1996. ISBN 1 85973 029 9. £34.95
From the Berg 'French Studies' series, General Editor: John E. Flower. A detailed analysis of the work of the 'Hussards'.

*** MICHEL TOURNIER**
David Gascoigne
Berg. 1996. ISBN 1 85937 084 1. £17.95
From the Berg 'New Directions in European Writing' series, General Editor: John E. Flower. The first book to provide a full study of the works of Tournier.

*** PATRICK MODIANO**
Alan Morris
Berg. 1996. ISBN 1 85973 004 3. £14.95
From the Berg 'New Directions in European Writing' series, General Editor: John E. Flower. An exploration of Modiano's fifteen major novels.

*** AS MIGHTY AS THE SWORD: A STUDY OF THE WRITINGS OF CHARLES DE GAULLE**
Alan Pedley
Elm Bank Publications, Exeter. 1996. ISBN 0 9502595 3 5. £24. 99
The key role played by de Gaulle's writings in his rise to power.

*** EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. Positive Strategies for Advanced Level Language Learning**
Suzanne Graham
Multiligual Matters Ltd. April 1997. ISBN 1 85359 379 6. £13.95 (paperback)
From the series Modern Languages in Practice, series editor Michael Grenfell. Of interest to teachers, trainers and postgrad students in applied linguistics or language education.

*** NARRATIVE VOICES IN MODERN FRENCH FICTION**
Edited by Michael Cardy, George Evans and Gabriel Jacobs
University of Wales Press. May 1997. ISBN 0 7083 13949. £30.00
Studies in honour of Professor Valerie Minogue, on the occasion of her retirement. Essays on Balzac, Sand, Flaubert, Sarrante, Proust, etc.

Francophonie, June 1997, No 15, 34–40

Reviews

Rendez-vous

Anneli McLachlan and Rosi McNab

Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1996.
Teacher's Resource and Assessment File, ISBN 435 37721 3, £49.95; Complete Cassette Pack (5 cassettes), ISBN 435 37720 5, £59.95 + VAT (Cassettes available separately, £12.50 each); Student Module Booklets, in packs of six, £22.50 per pack:
1A Chez moi, ISBN 0435 37706 X;
1B Chez moi, ISBN 0 435 37707 8;
2A On va en France, ISBN 0 435 37708 6;
2B On va en France, ISBN 0 435 37709 4;
3A Les vacances, ISBN 0 435 37710 8;
3B Les vacances, ISBN 0 435 37711 6;
4A Notre monde, ISBN 0 435 37712 4;
4B Notre monde, ISBN 0 435 37713 2;
5 Révision, ISBN 0 435 37714 0

Rendez-vous is the new course from Heinemann, written for low ability KS4 pupils. It is designed to be used to prepare them for either the full or short course at GCSE, and will also suit those preparing for non-GCSE courses such as the Certificate of Achievement. There are nine booklets to be covered for the full course as together they cover all the Areas of Experience. A modules cover Areas B, D and E while, for the short course only, B modules cover Areas A and C. The booklets may be used in any order and are followed by the Révision booklet.

Each of the booklets contain nine or so units. A unit consists of a double page of varied activities followed by a *Mots-clés* which brings everything neatly together for that unit. Each unit has additional activities at the back of the book in Extra! Here there are more authentic illustrations and texts than in *Allez-y!*, the now dated forerunner of *Rendez-vous*. In the Resource and Assessment File there are reinforcement worksheets, illustrated vocabulary worksheets and lists and extension worksheets suited to the lower grades of GCSE. There are also complete vocabulary lists for all modules, designed to be photocopied for pupil use for revision prior to testing or examination. There are progress sheets available and time saving grids for listening and reading activities.

Everything about *Rendez-vous* is clear and easily followed by both pupils and teachers. The activities are varied and explanations, in both French and English, are brief and to the point. Those familiar with *Allez-y!* will recognise that the same soundness and appropriateness are maintained and enhanced by more colour, more authentic and often more interesting materials with a more upbeat style. I look forward to using *Rendez-vous* with my pupils who have already had a look at the booklets and given them their seal of approval.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Série Rouge Readers from CUP

Including: Le Journal de Déliphine, Monique Alcott, ISBN 0 521 449790,
Chère Lambert, Ann and Mary Swarbrick, ISBN 0 521 44978 2;
Ménéstel le Tout Puissant, Marc Guiguin, ISBN 0 521 44980 4;
Marco raconte 13 Histoires Vraies, Marc Guiguin, ISBN 0 521 449839;
Aventure et Passion, Ann Swarbrick, ISBN 0 521 44981 20;
Des Roses blanches pour Danielle, ISBN 0 521 44981 2

Always keen to encourage pupils to read independently, I seized upon the opportunity to purchase some teenage fiction in book shops around Boulogne several years ago. Our library now has a respectable selection of French fiction which is mostly gathering dust!

Discovering *Série Rouge* was a huge relief. I realised that it was not actually true that teenagers don't like reading; finding something of interest written in language appropriate to their level is the real issue. *Série Rouge* with its collection of stories ranging from passion, crime and adventure to the everyday problems of teenagers has finally solved this problem for me.

Admittedly, I used these readers, which claim to cater for all ages from 14 up, with a well motivated, high ability Year 11 class, but even the weaker pupils in the group enjoyed and understood most of what they read. I encouraged reading for gist and the pupils tended to read in pairs, but I was still surprised that they hardly needed to use a dictionary at all. The stories do include some illustrations which aid comprehension.

Some of the girls in the class particularly enjoyed *Aventure et Passion* which contains four short stories. Although they complained that the stories were a little improbable, they still devoured them with much more enthusiasm than they do *Tricolore 4*! The stories certainly appealed to their avid interest in people and relationships.

I was pleasantly surprised by another girl's interest in *Marco Raconte 13 Histoires Vraies*. These stories are based on fact and appeared quite difficult to read, but a good Year 11 with a vague interest in history would, I believe, enjoy these. Many pupils of both sexes enjoyed *Des Roses Blanches pour Danielle* which I thought very accessible even for a good Year 9 or 10 pupil. These mysterious tales would appeal especially to any fan of the X-Files!

The most accessible of all was felt to be *Chère Lambert*. This is written in letter form where a French girl begins correspondence with her English exchange partner. Both girls write in their native language, which immediately eliminates problems of comprehension on the part of the reader. Pupils followed the French and were then able to check how much they had understood by reading the English reply. As the girls talk about themselves and their families the book is realistic and allows good revision of basic vocabulary. As the GCSE exam is largely based on letter writing, this book is a good reminder to pupils of how to set out a good letter, use different tenses and give lots of interesting opinions. I am not sure my pupils saw it in this light but they did enjoy the read!

Série Rouge would complement any coursebook in KS4. My Year 11 welcomed the brief respite from grammar and GCSE topic revision, and the fact that there are no accompanying worksheets or questions meant that they really could "read for pleasure"! *Série Rouge* could equally well offer light reading to Year 12 students or help to bridge the gap between GCSE and A-Level. It has certainly restored my faith in teenagers' reading habits.

TESSA H GRAHAM
Hinchingbrooke School, Huntingdon

Route Nationale Extra 3

Sue Brown and Margaret Butler

Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1997, ISBN 0-17-440081-0, Duplicating Master Cassettes, ISBN 0-17-440082-9 & 0-17-440111-6, £52.50 + VAT

Route Nationale Extra 3 is designed to provide extra support and practice to students using the Route Nationale course who find the materials in the coursebook difficult. It is also designed to be easily integrated into the mainstream materials. Extra 3 is user friendly for both the teacher and the students. The teacher's notes indicate clearly which Extra copymaster 'accesses' which page of the pupil's book – accessibility is the *mot clé* here. I like the way the teacher's notes contains a brief highlighted description of each worksheet, its purpose and suggestions as to how to exploit it. The Extra materials enhance the already differentiated *Route Nationale* course by creating an additional pathway into the core materials for less able pupils.

As an enthusiastic user of *Route Nationale*, I feel that the publishers underestimate the number of students who will be working with the Extra materials to help them deal successfully with many of the activities they will be tackling in the mainstream course, which can be very complicated at times. I know that we shall be using them on an almost day-to-day basis as worksheets, as OHTs for revision at the beginning of lessons and for reinforcement activities, clarity being one of their main strengths.

There is a 'celebration' worksheet at the end of each unit of the textbook which often offers an opportunity for creative use of the language learned in that unit in a supported way. There is pronunciation practice, gap-filling activities, puzzles, pair work, dictionary work, writing, individual and group listening work and much more.

The Extra 3 collection of worksheets and the accompanying cassette recordings form an excellent resource bank of differentiated materials which we shall find very useful in the classroom.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

French Vocabulary through puzzles

Gillian Taylor

Hodder & Stoughton, second edition, £18.99

This publication interested me because it seemed extremely versatile and appropriate for pupils of almost any age. Apart from satisfying the teacher's need for something educational yet motivating, it also seems to satisfy the pupils' hunger for independence and entertainment.

The puzzles are perhaps most appropriate for KS3 and are divided into six topics. They are photocopiable and have been designed for unsupervised use. I am always rather dubious about this sort of claim, and therefore decided to put this to the test. I copied a variety of anagrams, crosswords and codes on the topic of 'La maison' for a mixed ability Year 8 group who had just completed the relevant chapter in *Route Nationale 2*. I knew they would be familiar with most of the vocabulary and should be able to work out the instructions for themselves.

I was not disappointed. Although one or two pupils had been over ambitious in their choice and needed help to get started, the others quickly worked out what to do, especially as there is always an example in picture form. The puzzles tend to test pupils' understanding and spelling but some are more challenging than others. Every pupil found at least two puzzles from the choice of six which they were keen to do, and one even asked if he could finish his for homework – a sure sign of success!

Each set of puzzles is accompanied by a pictorial vocabulary list which can be referred to by pupils if necessary (this would work well, I think, if put on the OHP). I found the photocopiable solutions invaluable, especially as, once mounted on card, it was possible for pupils to take turns in marking their own work. Departments with restricted photocopying allowances beware: the pupils do need to write on each sheet and, unlike working from their usual coursebook, they seem to work through more than you expect!

I used the puzzles for reinforcement and revision purposes, but I can see that the majority would work well for cover lessons or unsupervised work if the vocabulary is generally known. Some of the codes proved 'quite challenging', as one helpful pupil explained, but the French itself was not too much of a problem. The only word which the pupils struggled with was 'électrophone' – clearly not a word they are familiar with these days!

I would certainly consider using these with pupils in Year 10 and 11 as a means of revisiting the old topics in a refreshing way, especially with those pupils who claim they "did this worksheet in Year 7". These puzzles are motivating and also cover the geography of France, a welcome addition to the more common topics such as food and shops.

TESSA H GRAHAM
Hinchingbrooke School, Huntingdon

Developing Dictionary Skills in French

Martine Pillette

Collins Educational, 1996,
ISBN 0 00 3201945, £25

This book of photocopiable sheets claims to solve your school's dictionary skills problem for just £25. Looking at the first worksheet master, I wondered if this was going to be an advert for Collins dictionaries, but only two out of the 40 sheets have pictures of the Collins dictionary on them. This is a relief for anyone who has SEN students, who tend to take such things very literally.

First impressions are good – the book is laid out clearly from the start, with no unnecessary notes. The contents grid is useful, listing topics and skills covered by each sheet. Activities are not listed according to key stage, but this is because many are appropriate for key stages 3 or 4, depending on ability. Activities get progressively difficult throughout the book, and are marked using a star system, from one star – easy, to four stars, which are most likely to be relevant to GCSE students.

The set of concise teacher's notes is especially useful if, as suggested, any of the sheets are to be used for cover lessons; it is clear at a glance whether teacher input is required. Instructions are in the target language, with explanations in English where necessary. A glossary of instructions is supplied, which would be a good starting point for a classroom display.

This resource has some excellent advice for GCSE students preparing for exams, as well as being accessible to the less able in KS3. Time saved by having such activities 'ready made' is of course invaluable, and the worksheets could be easily fitted in to any existing scheme of work. The comment from the most important people is, "Can we do some more of these, Miss?"

SARAH FITCH
New Parks Community College, Leicester

Revision for French GCSE

Rod Hares and David Mort

John Murray, 1996, ISBN 0 7195 7306 8, £13.99 (bookshop version with cassette).
*(Also available as **Bravo!** Pupil's book, ISBN 0 7195 7305 X, £4.99, Pupil's book (pack of 5), ISBN 0 7195 7311 4, £22.50, Teacher's book & cassette, ISBN 0 7195 7307 6, £25 + VAT*

Revision for French GCSE is a new generation revision guide intended to provide practice and preparation for the new GCSEs examined for the first time in 1998. The book is organised thematically around the five Areas of Experience, with reading, writing, listening and speaking exercises targeted at the Higher Tier of the GCSE. Most of the exercises have French rubrics and are modelled closely on specimen material produced by the exam boards for the new exams. Advice and guidance is kept to a minimum, with a brief initial discussion of effective revision strategies and a list of likely rubrics, translated into English. *Bravo!* has an identical format, with the sole difference that the answers and transcripts are to be found only in accompanying teacher's notes.

This guide has a number of useful features which recommend it for use at home or in the classroom. Each exercise has a target mark which indicates the number of marks the pupil will need to achieve if he/she is to gain a C grade – not of particular use to top set pupils in the A*–B category, but of enormous motivational benefit to those seeking to gain an acceptable pass, and comforting, perhaps, for higher achievers earlier in their course (at the end of Year 10, perhaps, or in the first term of Year 11). A particularly helpful feature of the cassette is that as well as containing the listening exercises, it has the teacher/examiner's role-play prompts, so that role-plays can be practised more realistically. Of course, speaking exercises cannot be marked by the pupil – the introduction suggests that these should be recorded and given to a teacher to mark – and, similarly, no feedback is offered on the practice writing exercises in the book. This is essentially a practice book, not a teaching book, and it concentrates on providing exercises with answers and minimal feedback; the format of the pupil's book, in fact, as in the bookshop version, lends itself to use as a workbook individual to each pupil, and hence not for re-use, although this may not be a practical consideration in schools.

Unlike most revision material currently on the market for the old-style exams, this book does not dwell on grammar or exam techniques, nor does it provide model answers: it is, purely and simply, a source of exercises for exam practice, written in an exam style and with guidance (in the form of a target grade) of how pupils will fare in the final exam. Class book or home revision guide: the choice is there, and teachers will have to consider carefully how best to integrate it into their scheme of work so as to draw maximum benefit from the features it has to offer. On balance, there is little question that it is a valuable resource, but for it to be most effective, its use will vary with classes of different levels and needs, and teachers themselves are in the best position to judge how it will most appropriately fit into their exam preparation.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts

Thématique 8

Mary Glasgow Publications, 1996.
ISSN 00 0095 5391 6, £51.99 + VAT

This latest set of photocopiable listening and reading resource materials from Mary Glasgow Publications for 6th form French teaching will no doubt prove as valuable in the classroom as the previous annual editions. Ten pages of teachers' notes, comprehensive answers and a transcript of all recorded material are a useful complement to 56 pages of authentic A-Level French texts, exploited exclusively in the target language with a wide variety of mixed-skill task types.

Schools who have been collecting *Thématique* since the early days will by now have an impressive resource for class topic work or as a stimulus for coursework. This year, coverage is given to six main topic areas. *La vie culturelle, Poitou-Charentes* and *Le Tiers Monde* are all new to *Thématique*, while *Les jeunes démunis, L'immigration* and *Le monde du travail* supplement material in earlier versions of *Thématique* with more up-to-date newspaper articles and other source material. A four page 'Stop Press' section at the end of the volume looks at news items that were in the news in February 1996 – not exactly hot off the presses, perhaps, but effectively a refreshing miscellaneous section that can be dipped into. More so this year than in the past, the exercises are targeted at Lower Sixth students, although not to the exclusion of the Upper Sixth, and many of the tasks provide useful exam practice.

Thématique is a practical resource because it is adaptable and teachers can pick and choose which topics and tasks to cover with each class. It deals with current issues and draws on recent texts, exposing students to contemporary life in French-speaking countries while practising the skills they need to develop throughout their A-Level course.

HELEN WRIGHT
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Matières Premières

Mark Stroud

Hodder & Stoughton, 1996, ISBN 0 340 64827 9, £9.99, Cassette, ISBN 0 340 648287, £9.99

This textbook and cassette are welcome additions to the resources available to students studying French on post-16 advanced courses. *Matières Premières* is a vocationally orientated resource that approaches a study of France and French through texts which explore various business-related aspects of contemporary France, and will be of value to a wide range of learners, including those preparing for parts of the revised A Levels (e.g. Unit 1 Part 1 of the Oxford Board), those taking higher level NVQs or similar vocational qualifications, and university students in the first or subsequent year of an applied languages degree.

The book is divided into 12 *Dossiers*, which range from *L'emploi et le travail* (*dossier* 1) to *Formation et carrières* (*dossier* 4) and *La publicité et les médias* (*dossier* 10) – all of which are topics covered at A Level – and encompass more specialised areas such as *L'agriculture et la pêche* (*dossier* 3), *Le commerce et la distribution* (*dossier* 6) and *Le tourisme et l'hôtellerie* (*dossier* 11). Each *dossier* follows the same pattern and is presented in a clear and manageable form over eight to ten pages. The *dossiers* begin with an introductory and manageable text in French of between 300 and 400 words, which is supported by French definitions of important words and phrases, and followed by a *vrai/faux* exercise and an oral stimulus – one of the key features of the course is its emphasis on student oral production in a structured or more formal environment. Section B contains another reading exercise – slightly longer and more demanding, with questions in French and scope for a summary – while section C uses the interviews on the accompanying cassette as the basis for questions in English and an oral presentation in French. The quality of the recordings is excellent, and the cassette exercises are a valuable source of advanced listening material. Section D is a *thème* (model answers, incidentally, are given with the cassette), and section E is a more detailed oral section, which can be exploited for presentations, interviews and discussions.

While the structure of the book may seem inflexible and perhaps a little unexciting, it covers, thoroughly, a wide range of topics and question types, and the simplicity of its layout makes it suitable for adaptation to a wide range of purposes – some students may choose to use it as a reading resource, for example, or even a selection of twelve *thèmes*. One of the major strengths of the course, in fact, lies in its successful combination of modern and more traditional approaches to learning and testing French, with weighting given to learning by communication, learning in the target language and also the more traditional translation into French, a discipline that post-16 students often lack and yet that is a valid skill in the realm of commerce and industry. In short, this is a versatile and affordable course that offers scope for adaptation to a wide variety of advanced French courses, in secondary schools, FE or HE.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts

La France aux cent Visages

Annie Monnerie

Hatier-Didier, ISBN 9 782278 04377 4

La France aux cent Visages is an attractive and well organised book. It achieves its stated aims within the constraints of serving the needs and stimulating the interest of post GCSE students or their European equivalents. Imaginative selection of topics, within each of its five sections produces a commendable breadth and variety of exploration. At the same time, it maintains a freshness which promotes a desire for further discovery.

The flavours and diverse elements of France are drawn together in a text which has overall unity and cohesiveness. Its history, commercial and scientific successes, culture and society, geographical and regional attractions and the ethical values of the nation all receive nicely balanced attention.

The pride that Annie Monnerie feels for her country is always evident. However, since the individual elements are objectively presented, French and European students alike will find no feeling of prejudice which might have diminished its appeal. French people should, similarly, have no complaints about the clear communication and pleasing style which is a common feature that enhances all contributory articles. If the majority of readers are those who study the text as a foreign language they will benefit from a range of items in differing styles. There is no vocabulary at the end for foreign students. This should encourage a healthy use of dictionaries. Diligent consultation will be profitable since there are few if any words which will not add to their communication skills. The vocabulary used is neither over technical nor too specialised. This is another advantage achieved by careful selection.

Modern examination syllabuses seem to reward good discursive writing and oral work. Examiners strive to promote a rich content of ideas and opinions in the work of pupils. *La France aux cent Visages* provides a sound basis for such aims.

Anni Monnerie's book compares very favourably with other texts presently on the market, which pursue a similar purpose. The diversity her book offers never strays from the principal aim of introducing us to France as a unity. This quality will meet with as much approval as its general interest and appeal. The publication has every chance of keeping the steady increase of new Francophiles flowing. As a learning aid it has the happy formula of seeming not to be a textbook, yet its adaptability and usefulness as a teaching tool cannot be doubted.

New horizons, fresh facts and tempting strands of thought occur with pleasing frequency. Keen minds and some of the not so keen will enjoy studying all aspects. There are good foundations here for further study.

IAN CORFIELD
Leeds

Cassell Guide to Literature in French

Valerie Worth-Stylianou (ed)

Cassell, 1996, ISBN 0 304 33204 6, £5.99 (£35.00 hardback)

This 274 page guide to literature in French consists of a series of 10 stimulating essays which enable the reader approaching French literature for probably the first time in detail to gain a critical understanding of a broad range of literature written in the French language. The contributors are university lecturers all well known in their fields, and the result is a concise but extremely informative and readable introduction to the field.

In part, it is a historical guide: the 10 chapters, while independent critical essays, take the reader on a journey from the Middle Ages to post-1940 literature, with two extra stops to explore francophone literature (chapter 9) and French thought since 1940 (chapter 10). The first eight chapters each begin with a short account of the events and philosophies that shaped the era, and this provides a benchmark by which the works in the rest of the chapter are measured. While the literary works are placed firmly in context, however, they are not bound by it: the overriding criterion by which they are assessed is their literary merit and impact. The Guide does not give detailed synopses of texts nor explore them exhaustively; instead, it attempts to draw texts within a given time period together according to movements, prevailing ideas and recurring themes in drama, poetry and prose. Its value lies in the fact that it manages to combine factual information with the ideas and values of the contributors, which permeate the text, while seeking not to appear dogmatic – one of the aims of the Guide is to prompt questioning, analysis and further exploration of the literary texts discussed: "literary criticism is essentially an act of dialogue" (V. Worth-Stylianou, p. xiv).

For reference purposes, further reading is listed at the end of each chapter, and the chronology of historical events and literature at the end of the book is concise but thorough. The coverage provided by this guide is wide-ranging and its content succinct; and it is to be thoroughly recommended. Written for undergraduates in the early stages of exploring French literature, this is precisely the sort of guide that a sixth-former intending to continue with French at university should be encouraged to read as a critical introduction to French throughout the ages.

HELEN WRIGHT
Bishop's Stortford College, Herts

Témoignages d'Entrepreneurs

Nicole Catani

Cardiff Institute of Higher Education, £135 for educational organisations, £235 for others

Témoignages d'Entrepreneurs is a course in business French comprising authentic recordings of interviews taken from France Inter, along with exercises based on those interviews. The recordings are grouped into nine *Dossiers* on such business-related themes as computer crime, consumer power, environmentally friendly business, barrel manufacture in Poitou-Charentes, and so on.

Each recording is divided into short extracts, each one with a short vocabulary list and a number of exercises. These include definitions of expressions used in the recordings, comprehension questions, 'true or false' questions, gap-filling, retranslation, guided summaries in English and many more.

As the author says in the foreword, the language is varied, dense and challenging. Students using this course would need a good grounding in French, A-Level standard at the very least. Most of the recordings are clear, but there are occasional inexplicable background noises, and one appears to have been made over the telephone.

Although aimed particularly at students on business-related courses in universities and Colleges of Commerce, the pack's use need not be restricted to this type of student, since the material will develop all students' comprehension of the spoken word and extend vocabulary.

The exercises come in a ring-binder, which also contains keys to the exercises and full transcripts of the recordings, allowing the tutor to make copies and use whichever parts are considered appropriate.

Témoignages d'Entrepreneurs is a most valuable pack, which can be used either in the classroom or language laboratory, or by a student working independently. The tutor who uses this pack will find a wealth of material providing many hours of classroom work.

B R FOSTER
Leeds Metropolitan University

Dictionnaire Financier Anglais-Français English-French Dictionary of Finance

AMCD Publishers Ltd. Altringham. Tel & Fax 0161 4345105. Specialist lexicon published in paperback (£5.00) with PC Dictionary version (£24.95)

The handy-sized paperback edition is 157 pages of 4000 terms essential for financial literacy. The areas covered include accountancy, auditing, stock exchange operations, money markets, insurance services and financial legal terms.

The terminology dealt with is wide-ranging and very much state-of-the-art. It stretches from the obvious (e.g. accident m = accident) to contextualized items requiring a good conceptual or practical knowledge of the area in question (e.g. accelerated depreciation = amortissement dégressif; accounts payable = comptes fournisseurs, effets à payer). This is what you would expect from a dictionary aimed primarily at interpreters, translators, financial market practitioners and presumably English-speaking HE students specializing in French for business. It is worth noting that the book version is English-French only. The other way round would be equally acceptable and, I am sure, equally marketable in Francophone countries.

The electronic pop-up demo-disk that I looked at does indeed contain both F-E and E-F dictionaries. It requires a 386 PC or above, with Windows 3.1/3.11 or 95. Here there are about 5000 lexical items embedded (to a limited extent) in context. The floppy is easy to use and its content accurate. French accents appear automatically when using the conventional QWERTY keyboard.

The pop-up facility combines with a dictionary word-count, a scrolling facility, and a part-word function for uncertain spellers... Typing in 'bil', for example, will give the dictionary variants of 'bilan' and 'billet' with their various translations.

I shall recommend the paperback to students on my more advanced courses and the PC version for networking.

GEOFF WAYWELL
Leeds Metropolitan University

Francophonie: Mythes, Masques et Réalités – Enjeux politiques et culturels

B. Jones, A. Wiguet and P. Corcoran (eds.)

Publisud. 1996. ISBN 2-86600-721-2. 228FF

Readers of this journal cannot but welcome the recent rapid development of Francophone Studies in Great Britain. The present wide-ranging volume has its origin in a conference held at the Roehampton Institute of the University of Surrey which brought together British and French academics and Francophone creative writers, in the presence of Philippe Legendre, *Sénateur du Nord* and one of the foremost proponents of Francophonie in France. The full title of the volume – like that of Dennis Ager's invaluable and in many ways complementary *Francophonie in the 1990s: Problems and Opportunities* (Multilingual Matters, 1995) – clearly indicates the problematic nature of Francophonie (the word itself defies translation into English).

Francophonie is currently defined as "countries sharing the use of the French language" and 49 countries were represented at the most recent Francophone Summit in December 1996. Although the word was coined as far back as 1880, it was only in the 1960s, in the immediate post-colonial period, that substance was given to the word, in particular by Léopold Senghor, *agrégé de grammaire*, poet and President of the newly independent Senegal, who put forward the idea of a French-speaking Commonwealth linking France and its former African colonies without any suggestion of neo-colonialism. The subsequent institutional developments of Francophonie, notably in the 1980s and 1990s, are charted in a useful chronology.

The stimulating contributions in the volume are grouped into three sections: *Enjeux politiques, Débats linguistiques* and *Vécu culturel*. There are case studies of the language situation in different francophone countries, together with contributions on aspects of francophone theatre, cinema and popular music. The introductory chapter by Anne Judge pertinently analyses the paradoxes of Francophonie, and senator Legendre presents what may be construed as the 'official' French position: Francophonie is under threat from American English and more generally from American culture. And here perhaps one may perceive one of the difficulties that France has with Francophonie: how to separate it from *la défense de la langue française*.

With almost as many people using French for everyday communication outside as within Metropolitan France, and given the richness and diversity of Francophonie, it is hoped that more teachers will consider introducing an aspect of Francophone studies into their students' project work.

HOWARD EVANS
University of Leeds

Around and About Paris

Vol. 3: New Horizons Haussmann's Annexation: The 13th to the 20th Arrondissements

Thirza Valois

Iliad Books, 5 Nevern Road, London SW5 9PG, 1997, 315pp. ISBN 0 9525378 2 6, £15.95

The first two parts of this highly readable *magnum opus* were reviewed in Issue No. 14 (December 1996). Happily the third part is now available, thus completing what must be one of the best guides to Paris ever written. In the last review comparison was made between Tirza Valois' work and the best of Baedeker. The comparison still holds and is indeed reinforced by this third volume which covers the 13th to the 20th *arrondissements*, subtitled 'Haussmann's Annexation'.

As in the first two volumes Thirza Valois' encyclopedic knowledge of Paris is placed at the reader's disposal to accompany him/her/them on their walks through Paris. Vastly informative this work impresses on the reader just how much travel guides have evolved from the impressionistic writings of earlier times, which may well leave a delightful impression of Paris but are largely unsubstantiated by fact. Think of *A Wanderer in Paris* or *The Silent Traveller in Paris*. Thirza Valois conveys all *their* love of Paris and in addition provides the reader with extensive detail on everything of interest.

In this third volume we begin in the *treizième*. A simple sketch reminds us that we are now on the outer circle of the *escargot* – from the Place d'Italie to the Cité Floriale, through 'Chinatown' to La Salpêtrière. This is not an area which I know and I found it a fascinating read. It was a good test of the readability of the book for I had no past memories to be reawakened and I enjoyed the whole section.

The *quatorzième* was for me a complete contrast. Since this is a part of Paris well known to me, I took pleasure in once again walking well known streets such as rue de la Gaité; where I first heard Georges Brassens at the Bobino in the fifties. It is perhaps when you already knows a district reasonably well that you realise how much more Thirza Valois can add to the experience from her own vast repertory of literary, historical, geographical, scientific, sociological and cultural allusion.

And so on up to the *vingtième* with each district in turn given detailed treatment. No street of any interest seems to be omitted. No artist or politician who has passed through and found inspiration there is neglected. No building of architectural merit is ignored. Thirza Valois' analytical mind throws light on every aspect. "Turn right into RUE CASSINI, an attractive, leafy street, home to several members of the intelligentsia at some time or other – Alain Fournier ... lived at no. 2, the philosopher Alain at no. 6, the astronomer Camille Flammarion at no. 16, and Balzac ... at nos. 4 to 8 occupied a three room flat on the first floor." Such bare bones of information are often enlivened by ironical and witty comment for, as must be clear by now, this book is no mere catalogue of things to see. Reading it is an experience almost as good as actually walking the streets with Thirza Valois at your side. Why doesn't some enterprising TV producer make us a programme on Paris with Thirza Valois as commentator?

As I said in my review of the first two parts, these Paris books are most definitely not coffee table books. They are meaty, brimful of information books. Some might say short on illustrations, though there are about twenty pen and ink sketches of street corners or monuments (by Masha Schmidt as in the previous volumes), and a large number of street plans (slightly simplified). These latter, I am assured by those who looked at Volumes 1 and 2, are very useful for anyone who does not know Paris well. I accept this judgement, though personally I would have preferred more detailed street plans. There is no doubt that they bring out clearly the area under discussion.

I understand that Thirza Valois expended seven years of shoe leather in preparing these books and, in addition, did a vast amount of research. She can rest assured that she did not waste her time, for she has given us a series of guides which will last for years to come. Schools and colleges which encourage project writing will find the three volumes of inestimable value for individual enquiry. Of course as a teacher of French I would have liked the whole thing to have been written in French. Perhaps Madame Valois would consider the idea for a future French edition.

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

A Dictionary of Idioms (American-French, French American)

Daniel Vitaglione

Minerva Press, Second impression 1997, ISBN 1 85863 819 4, £8.99

As the sub-title of this work clearly indicates there is not likely to be a large market for this book in the UK. It is obviously aimed at American speakers of French and at French native speakers who are lovers of modern American literature (of whom there are many). Nevertheless, as a native English speaker I have found it very helpful in interpreting a considerable amount of American idiom unknown to me despite a number of visits to the States and an early education studying under Lucille Ball.

"My neighbour is a real airhead."[1] "She aced the exam."[2] "He was barrelling down the road."[3] "He lives catty-corner from us."[4] (Alternatively "kitty-corner" or "caterwumpus") "Dad had a coniption fit when ..."[5] "You're going to have to eat crow now."[6] "They don't pay diddleysquat on this job."[7] "Chug a lug!"[8] "He had to get a shot in the tush."[9] "That candidate is a shoo-in."[10]

Such examples are fascinating and they undoubtedly explain why idiom develops, for it allows the original, the picturesque, may be even the poetic to flourish. Attempt to explain such an idiom in another language and watch the poetry wither. "The boss did not want to open up that can of worms." = "Le patron ne voulait pas aborder ce problème épineux." "She let the cat out of the bag." = "Elle a révélé le secret." "A watched pot never boils." = "quand on attend quelque-chose cela n'arrive jamais."

Of course Professor Vitaglione's book shows the same principle in reverse. "On lui donnerait le Bon Dieu sans confession." = "She is a goody-two-shoes." "Et ta soeur." = "So what?!" "Ses leçons particulières lui permettent de mettre du beurre dans les épinards." = "Giving private lessons allows him to supplement his income." And even before the advent of BSE: "IL a mangé de la vache enragée ma parole." = "What in the hell got into him?" "Il m'a fait une jambe de bois." = "He gave me a Charley Horse." (Hérail and Lovatt explain: "faire une jambe de bois" = "to leave without paying".)

But, on the other hand, there are many expressions so mundane and ordinary they hardly qualify as idioms at all: "I have a throbbing headache", "He's a real pal", "What do you guys want to drink?", "Nobody knew she was wearing falsies", "He dashed into the bedroom".

And so on. The work *is* intriguing because it does introduce and explain through French so many Americanisms, but having said that, you have said it all. In my view it falls between any number of stools. It's neither fowl, flesh nor good red herring. There are lots of these books around though I am never sure who uses them. *Livres de chevet* perhaps, though I really doubt that. Students are reluctant to buy books on spec these days. "How often shall we use it?" they ask when recommended to buy a particular book. How do you answer such a question? Certainly for UK students this book will be pretty low priority. It's not particularly scholarly, nor particularly comprehensive. Others have done the same thing and their books are still available.

Notes

1. Mon voisin est une vraie tête en l'air. 2. Elle a eu "très bien" à l'examen.
3. Il conduisait à toute vitesse.
4. Il habite diagonalement opposé à chez nous.
5. Papa a piqué une crise quand ...
6. Maintenant il va falloir que tu reconnaisses tes fautes.
7. Ce boulot paie presque rien.
8. Bois la bière d'un trait!
9. On a dû lui faire une piqûre dans les fesses.
10. Ce candidat est sûr de gagner.

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

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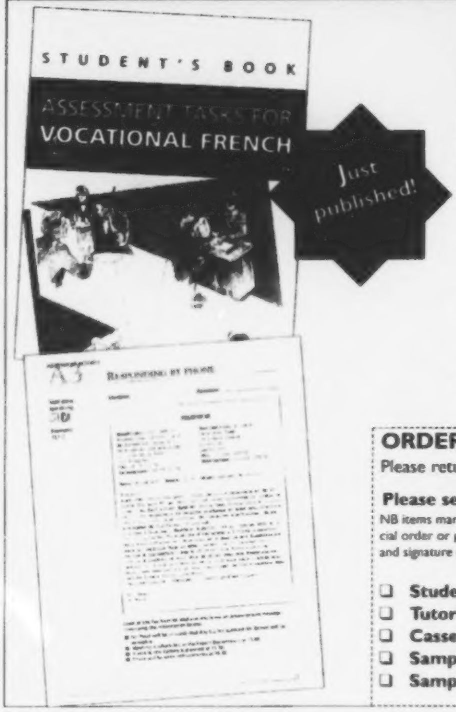

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FRANCOPHONIE

JUNE 1997 No 15

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FRANCOPHONIE

The French Journal
of the
Association for Language Learning

Computers and language testing
Comment faire face au stress
. . . and another reading pack sample
for class use

DECEMBER 1997
No 16

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FREE CLASSROOM RESOURCE MATERIALS

One of the reasons for changing over to an A4 format is to permit the inclusion in the journals of materials that can be used immediately for teaching purposes.

We have included some sample pages from the ALL Classroom Resource series (available also in German, Italian and Spanish).

For future issues, readers are invited to send in pages of resource material (any level, any sector) which they are willing to share with colleagues. They must be in A4 format, typed / word processed, and free of any copyright restrictions (this includes graphics).

DON'T BE SHY! SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE!! EVERYTHING IS GRIST TO THE MILL!!

Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 2

Editorial

"Il faut changer le changement," stated a prominent French politician at a rally in the eighties and readers of the ALL journals might be tempted to agree with him when, having just become used to the new A4 format, they learn that the journals are now to appear in a different order from previously. The result is that the hard pressed Editor has to produce another issue of *Francophonie* to appear in March and the next issue will then appear in September. Change is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better, as Dr Johnson pointed out. However there are good reasons for the changes as will become clear as the year progresses. Change is good for you – chose accoutumée rarement prisée – as the proverb has it.

Of course if readers do not agree with these sentiments they have all the opportunity in the world to express their views. Why not write to the Editor? Since Issue No.1, way back in June 1990, we have been waiting for a riposte from a reader. During that time there has been one letter – from an enthusiast for Esperanto teaching! And we printed it because it had something useful to say about French as well as Esperanto but we hoped that *someone* out there might disagree with it. But no one did.

Why is it that ALL members do not reach for their pens or, at the very least, switch on their word processors, either to denounce a point made by an author or to say how much they agree with it? Of course we recognise that members are heavily pressed with professional commitments of all kinds – books to mark, reports to write, requisitions to get in before Monday and OFSTED reports to digest. Life was certainly easier under Whitmarsh. In those days, as a cursory glance at the language journals of the times reveals, Editors could set poetry translation competitions which were apparently well supported and correspondents regularly wrote in to protest about the form and content of examination papers or, a very common theme, to protest about the appointment of native speakers as professors in English universities.

Perhaps with a change in the dates of publication readers might find a window through which they might fire a missive this way. The Christmas holidays could maybe produce a letter for inclusion in the March issue and the Easter holidays likewise for the September issue. Correspondence is getting easier for those of us with access to e-mail or fax. Even my own family write to me now and better still, when they do, I reply. Why hesitate? Try **asmalley@mcmail.com** and you may find your hunt and peck fingers start to run away with you. Don't let the old precept put you off – "Il faut tourner sept fois sa langue dans sa bouche avant de parler".

Editor

Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 3–7

Computers and language testing: a harmonious relationship?

Chantal Gervais
University of Lincolnshire and Humberside

Diagnostic testing is a subject on which I have worked for the last two years and some readers might recall an article published in June 1996, entitled 'Diagnostic Testing: the Humberside Solution', in which I described a diagnostic test designed for students of French. In brief, the diagnostic test was intended to be taken by first year students who wished to join one of the University language programmes but whose prior qualifications or past experience of the foreign language made it difficult for assessors to determine at which level of study they should be entered. Faced with large numbers of students and the sometimes complex nature of students' experience of learning a language, it is often difficult to assess which programme is best suited to the students' needs and yet, it is essential that the right decision be reached as early as possible in the teaching term. The University Languages Department offers three levels of study (*ab initio*, post G.C.S.E. and post 'A') and deciding whether to enter students on a post G.C.S.E. route or a post 'A' Level programme can be particularly problematical. The test helped to determine which of these two levels was more appropriate for the students concerned.

I also referred in the article to my desire to have the test computerised. The original diagnostic test was given to students as a seven-page booklet and a three-page booklet on which to write their answers was also handed out. It was obviously not very practical. Thanks to close collaboration with a member of the IT Department, namely Helen Power, a computerised test is now available for students to access. I thought it would be interesting to describe the difficulties we encountered in the setting-up of a language test on computer. Setting aside the obvious linguistic problems, (e.g. accents, use of open-ended questions, ... etc.), the university network also faced major changes during this period which did not make our task any easier, to say the least! In the end, the original written test had to be modified because of technological constraints. It was frustrating because the computer programme could not cope with some of the sections of the test and these had to be modified or even cancelled. I then started to wonder whether the computerised test was an improvement on the original paper one. I had my doubts. Wasn't this an example of technology being used for efficiency gains rather than for its pedagogical advantages? This is what incited me to do some further research. Students' responses are also enclosed in the present study and they are most helpful as they bring an essential perspective.

THE ORIGINAL DIAGNOSTIC TEST

The original test, to which I will refer as TEST A, was, as already explained, all on paper. The text itself (approximately 600 words) ran from page 1 to page 4. The exercises followed the text and were organised into three sections: grammar, vocabulary and comprehension. They were set out on pages 5, 6 and 7. One of the main criticisms of the test was that students found it operationally difficult to manage. The sheer amount of paper to process was a difficulty in itself. For a start, the text should have been separated from the questions for ease of use. This would have meant that three booklets would have to be handed out at the beginning of the testing session. Using computers instead seemed more and more attractive.

The original diagnostic test

The original exercises were as follows.

Section 1

This section tested grammar while familiarising students with the content of the text. This was the longest section and tested verbs, pronouns, infinitive constructions, relative pronouns and adjective endings. A brief reminder of what each one of these categories entailed was given to students, along with examples. I did not want students to underachieve simply because they had difficulty understanding the instructions.

Verbs were given in the infinitive in the text with an indication of the tense to be used. Students had to write the correct form of the verb.

The next three grammar sections were not multiple-choice as such. Students were reminded however of what sort of word they should be inserting (e.g. *le, la, les , l', lui, leur* ... etc).

The section on adjectives proved to be the most difficult and consequently the least well done. Four adjectives had been misspelt in the text and it was up to students to determine which ones they were.

Section 2

This section tested vocabulary. As this was set in context, students were made to get to grips with the text once again. The first seven questions were multiple-choice. Students were then given seven expressions in French and had to find their equivalent in the text.

Section 3

In this section, students' comprehension of the text was tested. Ten statements in French were given. Students had to decide whether they were true or false.

THE COMPUTERISED TEST – (TEST B)

The computerised test – (Test B)

Difficulties encountered

The main difficulty Helen and I faced was that a flexible approach did not seem to be possible. This raised my concerns as I feared that the validity of the test was jeopardised. The implication seemed to be that the original test would have to be modified to a large extent and the prospect of designing a test to allow for technological limitations did not really appeal to me. I knew that TEST A, for all its cumbersome handling, was nervertheless a reliable test and I did not want to have to alter it greatly.

Let us consider the main problem areas, or, to be more accurate, what I thought would represent major difficulties:

The first main difficulty in my mind concerned accents. It appeared that either all missing accents were to be penalised or none were to be. No differential could be made between some accents which do not matter as much and others which simply have to be correct (i.e. Forgetting the second accent marking the ending on *décidé* is in my mind, a more serious mistake than omitting the first one.) What if students had written *dècidé*? Again, it appeared that they would have to be penalised in the same way.

I therefore decided that all accents should matter and stressed this point several times in the instructions given to students. They took this point on board straight away as their answers indicated. Much to my surprise, I must say, they had made a real effort to remember about accents, much more it seemed than if it had been a written paper: *a dû, dès le début, à l'époque* and *a été fondé* were usually spelt correctly, even by the weaker students. The apparent lack of flexibility had in fact served one purpose: to make students focus on the importance of accents.

Section 2 in which students had to write the equivalent expressions in French suffered also from this lack of flexibility. For example, the first expression I had given them was: *il a été créé*. They had to find in the text, *le Canard a donc été fondé*. It was only however by inserting *il a été fondé* that they scored right. When marking the paper copy myself, I had accepted *il a été fondé* or *a été fondé* or *été fondé*. Studying the results however, I was surprised to discover that this did not seem such a problem after all. Out of 14 students, eight had answered *il a été fondé*, two had given *le Canard a été fondé*, two had given completely different answers and the last two had not attempted the question. *Il a été fondé* was therefore the most likely answer and I decided to keep it in the test.

Similarly, *sans beaucoup d'argent* had to have as an equivalent *avec des moyens dérisoires. Des moyens dérisoires* had to be penalised. The results showed that in this case, seven students had the correct answer, only one wrote *des moyens dérisoires*, five wrote *ne nuit pas à ses finances* and one did not answer the question. The problem did not therefore lie with students omitting *avec* and I decided to keep the question.

I had also given them *dès le commencement* and expected either *dès le début* or *dès sa naissance*. Only one answer however could be accepted on computer. I therefore changed the question slightly. Instead of asking for the equivalent of *dès le commencement* only, I gave them both *dès le commencement* and *dès sa naissance. Dès le début* became the only possible answer.

The section where students had to find which adjectives were misspelt simply had to be cancelled. Although only four adjectives had to be found, the computer programme could not cope with the unpredictability of the order in which students were to give their answers. I could have guided students by giving them, for instance, the first letter of each adjective. The order in which their answers would have been recorded could then have been predicted but I decided against it. This section had always proved too arduous.

The different sections were presented to students at random. The idea was that students sitting next to each other would not necessarily be working on the same exercises. This, I thought, was an advantage especially if the test was to be accessed by large numbers of students and supervising them might prove difficult. It also added an element of fun which was appealing.The aspect I had failed to consider then is that I had organised the sections on the paper test with a particular objective in mind. For instance, the grammar and vocabulary exercises had to come first as they made students work through the text several times and by doing so, the aim was that they should slowly acquire the gist of a text which, at first sight, seemed difficult to understand. It was no good giving them the last section on comprehension of the text as the first exercise. This is however what happened once the test was computerised. Not all the time of course, as the different sections appeared on screen at random but some students were unfortunate enough to have to deal with a very complex exercise immediately.

I therefore mentioned several times in the instructions that they could flick through the sections and attempt what they perceived as too difficult, at a later stage. I made it very specific and advised them not to do the exercise on 'comprehension of the text' at the beginning as I explained that they needed time to get to grips with the text.

Finally, it was decided to keep the text on paper as it made it easier for students who had to read it several times. The format was changed so that students were issued with a smaller booklet than previously. (Three pages instead of four. The first page included guidelines and recommendations.) Students were also given a sheet explaining how to produce accented characters on the computer.

Advantages of Test B

I must say that, for all its shortcomings, students took to the test more readily than when it was all on paper. They followed the instructions without any problems. Moreover, an element of fun had been introduced and they became very involved in their task. They really enjoyed it.

This was sufficient to convince me that despite the difficulties encountered, the computerised test presented undeniable advantages. Of course, it still needed to be improved but I felt it was worth devoting more time to it.

Another advantage was that students were given immediate feedback at the end of the test and they appreciated it. They had taken to the task very seriously and being granted a PASS with comments congratulating them on their efforts was very significant to them. They commented however that being given a percentage mark would be more useful. I agreed.

Ten minutes after completion of the test, a detailed print-out of students' responses was available and this was of course extremely useful. I was then able to analyse students' answers at a glance as the results were printed very clearly.

I enclose some of the comments I received once the test was finished. I had simply asked students to jot down their first reactions. I must however point out that the computerised test was first undertaken by 13 first year students on a post 'A' Level programme, in their second semester of study. (The test had not been available until then, owing to difficulties with the network).

Year 1, Post 'A' Level students

> "Good! Tests various areas of French including vocabulary and grammar. First bit was a little difficult - no indication as to the fact that the answers were in the first half of the paper: spent ages looking (wasting time). Definitely for post A level because of complex grammar and wide knowledge of vocab. needed". (Adam[1] scored 57.8%)

> "I felt it tested my ability in French grammar and taught me a little about how to structure sentences. The format seemed clear and interesting but there was always the temptation to guess the answers from the box. On the whole I enjoyed it but I thought the text was a little long and you soon lost interest. At the end I thought I'd understood most of the text". (Gareth scored 40.7%)

> "A fairly difficult exercise, but I managed to pass. There should be a percentage mark to tell you how much you got so it can be improved next time. I thought that the numbers in the text should go in a logical order, as they seemed to jump about throughout the text. Instructions were fairly clear, and I enjoyed the exercise as it made a nice change to use the computer. By the end I understood most of the text."

(Although Rachel had passed and this is the feedback she was given on computer, her detailed results, ten minutes later, indicated she had scored 0%! Obviously, the result was inaccurate and it would have to be investigated further. The problem when such a mistake is made is that it undermines one's confidence in the system).

> "I thought it was a bit long for the time but fairly easy to do. The instructions were very clear and I did enjoy doing it but I did need some time to read through the text first giving [sic] that the questions are based on it. At the end, I did understand the text. I thought 'cool' if we're going to use computers". (Delphine scored 61.8%)

> "Easy to understand what to do – instructions were clear. By doing the exercises it made it easier to understand what the text was about. Found the exercises where you had to identify the pronouns quite hard. Enjoyed the exercise as it was a change. I don't think I would improve the test - I found it easy to follow. I look forward to the session on the computers as it is a change". (Helen did the test in 30 minutes only. She was the fastest and scored 80.2%)

> "I thought that the words and numbers in brackets in the written text made it a bit confusing to start with. However after going through the

> answers I was able to understand it". (Sally scored 51.3%)

> "The questions were in an illogical order. Too much jumping back and forth on the handout text. I think it would be better if the questions followed the text and the whole text'd [sic] be on computer and just fill in the blanks regardless of the grammar groupings. That way I'd thought it would be more effective when one had to see the question in context. In the end, there could be a review of all the questions with the grammatical explanations. I still loved doing the exercise. You can work at your own pace, you cannot cheat, you get the results immediately". (Joe scored 46%)

> "Good especially for practicing [sic] verb constructions. Had problems at first with using accents.' (James did not finish the test as he started 15 minutes late". He scored 28.9%)

> "I enjoyed doing it but the mouse was faulty. I thought it was very demanding from a grammar and vocabulary point of view. I hope that it will serve to improve my vocab and grammar". (Barry scored 60.5%)

(Interestingly, Barry does not use computers if he can avoid it! He had not encountered any major technical problems, apart from the mouse, and he had enjoyed it. He even commented after the test that computers might not be that bad after all.)

> "I thought the assessment was a good idea and it involved the different aspects of French such as the general vocab, and grammatical aspects like pronouns etc. I quite enjoyed doing this as it was different to just doing it on paper". (Gillian scored 59.2%)

> "Text = very difficult at a first glance. Did not enjoy doing it as I found the text quite uninteresting". (Karen scored 63.1%)

> "I found the test quite difficult. There was enough time to complete it. The questions were varied, I liked that as it tests most of the grammar skills". (Anna scored 65.7%)

> "The test was at first difficult, but the more I went back to pages, the clearer it became. The most difficult was the first as it involved reading through a lot of text at one time in order to type the answer. I enjoyed doing it as it is very useful. I felt nervous first but it was OK in the end".

(Carla was the unfortunate student who had to cope with the section on 'understanding of the text' as the first task. She scored 32.8%.)

(I should like to note that I was not surprised by the results obtained by the students, except of course, in the case of one student who scored 0% and this problem is being addressed.)

The test was also administered in the same week to a group of second year students on a post GCSE programme. After three semesters of study on this route, post GCSE students follow the same programme as post 'A' Level and they are assessed in the same way. It would be interesting to compare their results to see whether the gap has indeed been bridged.

Comments from some Year 2, Post GCSE students

> "I found that when I started, it was not very clear as to exactly what would be required during the test. The text was fairly difficult but I found it enjoyable working at my own pace on the computer". (Karen scored 60%)

> "It was a very complex transcript which I found hard to translate. A dictionary would have helped me with the vocab which was very difficult and of a standard I have not yet reached!". (Debbie scored 38%)

> "It was a very hard text to understand. The vocab was difficult. It was better doing it on computer rather than writing it but more time would have been useful". (Beverley scored 42%)

> "I found that the program was easy to use and was more fun than doing it on paper". (Helen scored 63%)

> "I think this exercise was quite difficult in places and was testing. I did think it was good doing it on computer which made it more interesting to do. I believe it would be a good thing to carry out future French tests in this way". (Dale scored 42%)

> "I found it extremely difficult, perhaps it was because of the 2 week break. The actual text was difficult to translate. I prefer paper tests to computer tests". (Kieran scored 27%)

> "I thought the test was a very useful exercise even though it was very difficult. I understood what we had to do clearly but the text was quite hard to understand. A dictionary would have helped".

(Nick did not finish the test. Time-management seemed a real problem to him and he only scored 22% because he did not complete all the tasks. Checking his answers however was very useful as it highlighted the fact that the exercises he had done were all correct. Being able to give him some positive feedback was important as this student had taken to the task very conscientiously).

THE WAY FORWARD

The way forward

The test should be administered in the first or second week of term in order to fulfil its objectives. (Hopefully, there will not be any more changes to the network making it difficult to run the tests smoothly.)

A difficulty I envisage is that students might find it very hard to have to use computers at such an early stage. I am perhaps deceiving myself completely here as students might be much more computer literate than I give them credit for. Nevertheless, I have to assume they are not and that they might be more nervous when attempting the test than if they were to do it on paper. (James' comment for instance highlighted the problem he encountered with accents. The reason was that he was not using the numeric pad but instead, figures at the top although the instructions were very clear. James was flustered because of his being late and he had not taken proper care with reading the instructions.)

I therefore decided to change the whole layout of the test by making it much more user-friendly. I deleted words which could cause stress and instead offered guidance and encouragement. For instance, I substituted the word 'test' for 'exercise' as the latter is certainly less threatening. Instead of brief commands, the instructions appeared as full sentences, using ordinary vocabulary. In short, I tried to make students feel at ease and presented the whole exercise much more like a game. (I felt however that they still needed to be informed of the purpose of the test in order to avoid complacency.)

I also decided that more time could be made available. The time they spent doing the exercise was recorded along with the results. A time limit however had to be set.

Finally, I felt it was essential to ask students during their first week at the university to go to the Computer Centre to practise logging on to the network.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

The computerised version of the test is different from the original test but this is not necessarily so bad a thing as I had feared. On the contrary. Test A was cumbersome in many respects. Test B is more appealing to students and much easier to administer. Test B has been adapted so that the present limitations of the programme we are currently using do not have an adverse effect on students' performance.

Gareth's comments in particular were most interesting. He, and others like him, seemed to consider the exercise as a learning task. The activity was not simply assessing acquired knowledge. It was useful in that many students felt they were improving their language skills. The exercise served a double purpose and this was a bonus!

Gareth's comment about being tempted to guess the answer from the options given in the box confirmed my own doubts about multiple-choice testing. This is the reason why I had not included many sections relying on this mode of assessment. A shame as far as my colleague was concerned as multiple-choice testing presents no difficulties whatsoever with computer technology! But I was adamant.

There is always the danger that technology is not infallible and that mistakes can be made, as was so obviously the case with Rachel's results. It is therefore of paramount importance that students be given the opportunity to see their results in full and discuss them if they wish. Computers are valuable tools. Language learning however as well as language testing cannot solely depend on them.

Finally, it has been most interesting and challenging to be involved in devising a computerised language test. Close cooperation with my colleague made it possible. As computer programmes become more and more sophisticated, it is highly probable that the difficulties we encountered might not exist any more in the future. Accents for instance could be penalised according to a grading scale, instead of this 'all' or 'nothing' approach, as one of my students, a real computer enthusiast, explained to me. Such programmes exist already I am sure. We had of course used the University's existing facilities. Programming is also very time-consuming as most people know. I felt that the results we had obtained however were encouraging. Ideally, I would have liked to insert a section where students were free to answer open-ended questions in French. This would indeed be a true indicator of their written performance in the language. Also, a spoken test should accompany the written task in order to obtain a complete and accurate picture of students' overall performance. Language testing is very complex and so far it seems, human interaction cannot be replaced by technology. I would nevertheless welcome devising new language exercises on computers, first of all, because I enjoyed it and secondly, because of the positive feedback from students. Close collaboration with an IT specialist of course is essential.

NOTE

1. Students agreed to be named.

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Faut – il étudier la traduction au secondaire?

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La traduction était plus ou moins la seule méthode déployée dans l'enseignement des langues classiques, principalement du latin. Cette méthode vulgarisée par des érudits allemands s'appelait jadis la méthode grammaire-traduction (Richards et Rodgers, 1986, 3). Dans les universités européennes cette méthode a été vigoureusement utilisée dans la formation des étudiants cultivés, étudiants qui étaient suffisamment sensibilisés et entraînés pour l'appréciation de grandes oeuvres littéraires et philosophiques (Perrin, 1991, 65). Mais cette formation a cédé sa place à une formation linguistique.

"La traduction était plus ou moins la seule méthode déployée"

Cette méthode traditionnelle a été utile au secondaire aussi. Seulement elle a été négligée plus tard au profit des autres méthodes. Ces méthodes – telles les méthode directes, audio-orales, audio-visuelles entre autres – voulaient que toute intrusion de la lange maternelle et de la méthode traditionnelle ou méthode grammaire-traduction soit rejetée dans son intégralité. La méthode communicative de l'enseignement des langues, de sa part, n'accepterait la traduction qu'avec des réserves. Les arguments allaient ainsi: il fallait (au début) défavoriser l'écrit au profit de l'oral dans l'enseignemant d'une langue étrangère. Des hourras et des applaudissements retentissaient dans les ambiances scolaires, car étudiants et professeurs se croyaient libérés du carcan de la traduction pédagogique! Beaucoup justifient facilement leur point de vue. Lisons ce que Richards et Rogers (1969, 5) avaient à dire à propos de la traduction en classe:

> bien que la pratique de la méthode grammaire-traduction soit répandue, il manque d'adhérents: il lui manque également de théories et de travaux de base qui la justifient ou qui l'approchent aux questions de psychologie ou de théorie pédagogique.
>
> (notre propre traduction)

S'appuyant sur la théorie behavioriste skinnerienne, certains professeurs des langues étrangères ne voyaient que des habitudes produites par le procédé de stimulus-réponse et renforcement. Selon B. F. Skinner (1974, 59) la meilleure définition que l'on puisse donner au mot 'traduction' c'est "...un stimulus verbal qui conduit au même effet que l'original..." (notre propre traduction). Mais Chomsky rejettera la psychologie du comportement concernant l'apprentissage des langues, car pour lui, "language is not a habit structure. Ordinary linguistic behaviour characteristically involves innovation, formation of new sentences and patterns in accordance with rules of great abstractness and intricacy" (cité par Richards et Rodgers, 1969, 59). En un mot, le langage n'est pas donc toujours un comportement imité. Du côté de Chomsky, il existe des "capacités innées pour l'apprentissage d'une langue" (Chomsky, cité par Rivers, 1988, 4). Aujourd'hui tout donne à penser que l'ardeur des opposants contre la traduction n'est plus ce qu'elle a été. Les raisons sont évidentes: les progrès constatés dans les 'nouvelles' approches étaient décevants et "le succès manquait d'éclat" (Coste, 1972, 17). Donc la recherche pour la 'voie royale' (Ibid) de l'apprentissage des langues étrangères devrait se poursuivre.

Cette recherche a mené les didacticiens à redécouvrir que la traduction pédagogique que nous désignons par le sigle 'tra-péd' dans cette communication "reste un débouché important pour l'enseignement des langues" (Debyster, 1987, 2). Mai tra-péd n'est pas à l'abri des assauts des critiques quant à son manque de fondement théorique. Le théme utilisé avec prudence sans avoir pour but majeur de tendre des pièges aux élèves serait d'une certaine utilité. Chaix (1991, 36) parlait même du véritable malaise, voire la misère, de la traduction pédagogique sur les domaines pratiques et thèoriques. Chaix ne soulignait que ce qui a été dit par Lavault (1987, 121):

Puisque aujourd'hui la traduction est à nouveau

> acceptée en didactique des langues, il semble nécessaire de réfléchir à la problématique de la traduction, de redéfinir la traduction pédagogique, de l'adapter à l'évolution des méthologies et de la rapprocher justement de cette pédagogie de la traduction qui en semble éloignée.

En quatre mots, la traduction pédagogie est utile, mais certaines questions demandent des réponses encore. Quoi traduire au secondaire? Traduire pour quoi, pour qui, et comment? Dans cet article, nous allons essayer de trouver des réponses à la question 'comment traduire'?

COMMENT TRADUIRE?

Le souci de nouvelles réflexions a poussé Lavault et d'autres de la théorie interprétative à ESIT (Ecole Supérieure des Interprètes et des Traducteurs) de proposer l'intégration de leur théorie à la traduction. Ces tenants (Seleskovitch, Lederer, le Féal parmi d'autres) veulent une approche communicative, une merveilleuse approche qui est malheureusement fautive sur le plan pratique. Au moins cette approche ne sera pas d'une grande utilité dans une école secondaire. Prenons un exemple de Lavault (1987, 122) pour montrer qu'il est presqu'impossible d'être fidèle à cette approche (il s'agit ici de deux automobilistes qui se sont accrochés à un carrefour)

> Where the devil do you think you're going? Look what you've done to my wing! Can't you use your eyes? The lights must have been at red for you

Les étudiants auront tendance à donner un transcodage:

> Où diable pensez-vous que vous allez? Regardez ce que vous avez fait à mon aile? Ne pouvez-vous pas vous servir de vos yeux? Les feux devaient être au rouge pour vous?

Cette traduction est valable au niveau de la traduction pédagogique, car, en gros, le message voulu est transmis. Mais la question qui se pose c'est: est-ce qu'un locuteur natif français parlerait de la sorte? Pour pouvoir transmettre l'ampleur des nuances voulues, Lavault a proposé ceci

> Hé dites donc, vous vous croyez où? Vous avez vu mon aile? Vous êtes aveugle ou quoi? Vous êtes passé au rouge, vous n'allez pas me dire le contraire.

Cette traduction insiste sur le vouloir-dire. L'étudiant est encouragé alors à comprendre le message (à décoder) et puis à ré-exprimer (à encoder). Il ne se laisse pas alors hypnotiser par les mots. Le souci d'être fidèle au sens est atteint, le message est véhiculé comme un locuteur autochtone, mais cette approche sera au-delà de la grande majorité de nos étudiants. L'étudiant nigérien dont le bain linguistique n'est pas fondé dans une ambiance purement francophone, pourra-t-il s'inspirer facilement des approches communicatives? Evidemment pas avec tous les problèmes fondamentaux auxquels il doit faire face. Mais il faut admettre que l'approche serait plus efficace quand il s'agit de la version.

Les faiblesses dans les approches communicatives nous convainquent qu'il ne faut pas imposer faussement une systématisation théorique. C'est pourquoi nous parlons, de préférence, d'approche et non pas de méthode. Ce dont la traduction a besoin (pour le moment) est une approche pratique qui serait efficace dans l'enseignement du français langue étrangère (FLE). Nous partageons le point de vue de Nelson Brooks (Coste, 1972, 20), qui avait signalé avant nous que le terme 'méthode' était trop "limitatif et et contraignant et préférait retenir approche". Parler d'une approche nous libère du dogmatisme méthodologique qui a insisté trop sur des fondements psychologiques de l'apprentissage des langues. Personne ne niera l'importance des affirmations scientifiques ou des théories, mais il faut dire qu'une théorie trompeuse ne conduira pas à un succès. Donc la théorisation peut céder la place à un pragmatisme fondé sur la pratique.

NIVEAUX DES TRADUCTIONS

Nous avons pu reconnaître trois niveaux de restitution en tra-péd. Ces niveaux peuvent se mettre en généralisations qui, à leur tour, pourraient se monnayer sous forme d'hypothèse.

Niveau I: Tra-péd ne restituera qu'une sémantisation superficielle de l'original qu'il transforme (parfois) plus ou moins mécaniquement en structure artificielle dans la langue cible, e.g.

> Extend my greetings to your wife
> Aidez-moi à saluer votre femme

Niveau II: Compte tenu de la primauté du langage en tra-péd, une sémantisation superficielle qui n'admet pas une structure artificielle sera admise. Autrement dit, une traduction admissible doit respecter les critères exigés en syntaxe et en lexique. C'est à ce niveau qu'opère la première traduction de Lavault citée plus haut. L'élève est fidèle aux mots, il garde ou respecte la grammaire, mais les phrases ne sont pas idiomatiques par rapport au contexte. La majorité de nos élèves ne dépasseront pas ce niveau la plupart du temps. Mais à ce niveau, ils démontrent déjà non seulement une bonne compréhension de l'original, mais ils se font comprendre assez facilement en langage. Voyons quelques exemples:

"en gros, le message voulu est transmis"

Attention, chien méchant!	Attention a wicked dog!
remise des diplômes	Presentation of certificates

Mais ce deuxième niveau n'exclut pas le troisième, le niveau le plus haut de l'échelle, le niveau souhaité.

Niveau III: La meilleure traduction en classe est plus consciente d'une sémantisation naturelle qu'une production linguistique. C'est à ce niveau qu'on peut trouver la deuxième traduction de Lavault citée plus haut.

D'une manière pratique nous préconisons la réintroduction de certaines approches rejetées dans la pédagogisation des langues:

1. La mémorisation des règles de langue, des conjugaisons et des vocabulaires. Cette approche, fortement dévalorisée et méprisée, a ses avantages. A force de répéter et de lire à plusieurs reprises, l'élève finit par intérioriser les mots. Cette approche a été utile dans le passé; on peut la réintroduire avec caution.

   Il faut dire de rejeter complètement cette approche c'est ignorer "toutes les cultures (chinoise, arabe, etc.) où la mémorie a été systématiquement valorisée et développée..." (Coste, 1972, 20). Nous ne voulons pas pousser l'argument jusqu'à faire de la mémorisation la 'second nature' de nos élèves. Mais les expressions et mots appris par coeur pourraient être un grand atout si on les emploie avec prudence. Le professeur ferait comprendre aux élèves que le véritable sens des mots dépend du contexte. Les expressions figées telles – entendre voler une mouche, porter de l'eau à la rivière, à table, etc. – ne seront pas objets de beaucoup de difficultés.

   Un dernier mot sur la mémorisation: le dédain contre la mémorisation est très souvent fondé sur des opinions et non pas sur des recherches scientifiques (Coste, 1972).

"les expressions et mots appris par coeur pourraient être un grand atout si on les emploie avec prudence"

2. Faire une liste de faux amis au profit des étudiants. La liste ne doit pas être longue. Elle sera nécessitée pas les besoins des élèves.
3. Faire une étude contrastive (de temps à autre) sur des éléments communs. Cette comparaison aidera les élèves à identifier certaines zones d'interférence. De courtes phrases sont conseillées, e.g.

   (a) J'*ai* faim
   I am hungry
   (b) Je doute *de* son intelligence
   I doubt his intelligence
   (c) J'ai emprunté un livre *à* mon ami
   I borrowed a book *from* my friend

Evidemment, il n'est pas conseillé de mettre trop d'accent sur ce genre d'exercise. Néanmoins l'application judicieuse d'une étude contrastive est l'une des occasions privilégées de mettre en évidence des lacunes lexico-grammaticales dans l'anglais des élèves. Le professeur de traduction ne peut être indifférent à la justesse de l'anglais de ses élèves. Soit en version soit au thème, le professeur a beaucoup à faire pour contribuer au succés des élèves. Dans une ère où les élèves chez nous ecrivent ou disent souvent exemple des phrases comme "I don't aware", "why do people poor?" ou "I will brought it tomorrow", la responsabilité du professeur est lourde, il n'est pas à envier.

Certaines phrases isolées pourraient se servir pour enseigner des aspects particuliers de la langue étrangère. Par exemple, on peut enseigner les adverbes en traduisant des phrases comme:

(a) Ebiere works very hard
Ebiere travaille assidûment
(b) She works intelligently
Elle travaille intelligemment.

Les professeurs abusent souvent de l'emploi de phrases isolées et hors de contexte. Il est donc mieux d'entamer la plupart du temps des traductions des textes abordables et intéressants. Un essai de choisir toujours et délibéremment des textes pleins de pièges risque de mettre en erreur.

CONCLUSION

Notre approche ne veut pas rejeter la langue comme un système où les éléments structurels ou lexicaux doivent s'apprendre isolément dans tous les cours. Mais le professeur ne peut pas se passer complètement des éléments isolés. L'approche grammaire-traduction n'est plus la seule dans l'enseignement des langues au secondaire. Donc son approche peut insister plus vigoureusement sur la pratique 'traductionnelle'. L'approche n'insiste plus sur une culture humaniste et classicante, mais elle n'abandonnera pas l'écrit. Au secondaire, le recours à l'écrit doit être intensifié sans rejeter les apports positifs des psychologues, des linguistes et des pédagogues, mais il convient de remarquer les divergences ou les écarts entre la théorie et la pratique. Parfois le seul élément commun aux deux c'est leur parallélisme de voie. Pourquoi pas donc identifier votre objectif (en tant que professeur de français) découvrir les besoins des élèves et vous adapter à votre approche, même si vous risquez d'être accusé de pratiquer un "isolationisme pédagogique" (Coste, 1972, 20).

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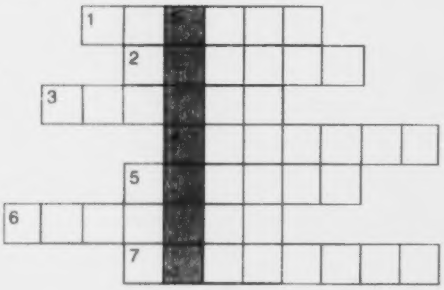
MARINE LIFE QUIZ

In the appropriate squares across the grid, write the French equivalents of the sea creatures given below. 8 down will then reveal the French word for another sea creature



1. Jellyfish 2. Squid 3. Shark
4. Octopus 5. Seal 6. Whale 7. Eel

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Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 12–14

Comment faire face au stress de l'enseignant?

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Que signifie le stress de l'enseignant?

Le stress de l'enseignant désigne l'ensemble des émotions désagréables et négatives éprouvées par l'enseignant, telles que la colère, l'anxiété, la tension et la dépression, résultant de certains aspects de son travail d'enseignant.

> **"Il est généralement admis que 'presque tous les enseignants connaîtront du stress de temps en temps'"**

Pourquoi les enseignants rencontrent-ils stress au travail?

Tous les êtres humains ont hérité d'un système biologique qui prépare leur corps à réagir rapidement en présence du danger physique. Cette réaction du corps se manifeste le plus souvent par un battement accéléré du cœur. Dans notre passé évolutionnaire, l'importance de ce phénomène était de permettre au corps de faire face au danger physique. Cependant, ce qui est arrivé actuellement c'est que dans la société moderne de nos jours, quand les individus perçoivent une menace psychologique pour leur amour-propre ou leur bien-être, leur corps répond de la même façon biologique que lorsqu'il est en présence d'un danger physique.

Qu'est ce qui declenche le stress?

Le stress peut être déclenché par toute situation où l'enseignant sent qu'il y a une tâche importante à accomplir, et où manquer d'accomplir cette tâche avec succès aura des conséquences néfastes sur son amour-propre ou son bien-être.

Quels sont les signes du stress?

Les signes de stress les plus communs sont: souffrir d'insomnie, s'inquiéter pour des problèmes qui ont besoin d'être affrontés, se sentir la plupart du temps, sous tension, et devenir facilement bouleversé ou tourmenté par des problèmes futiles. Ces signes peuvent aussi conduire à des symptômes physiques, tels que les ulcères fréquents de la bouche, l'indigestion, et l'incapacité de se débarrasser de maladies mineures telles que le rhume et la toux.

Quelle est l'ampleur du stress de l'enseignant?

Il est généralement admis que "presque tous les enseignants connaîtront du stress de temps en temps", suite à leur travail. Il y a, toutefois, beaucoup d'enseignants qui connaissent régulièrement des niveaux de stress élevés. Des études portant sur le stress des enseignants ont montré que, typiquement, environ un quart de tous les enseignants trouvent que l'enseignement est un métier stressant. En comparaison avec d'autres métiers, l'enseignement semble être une des professions les plus stressantes.

Pourquoi le stress de l'enseignant est-il un probleme?

Subir de hauts niveaux de stress de façon régulière peut conduire à un état appelé 'burnout de l'enseignant' où l'enseignant se sent complètement épuisé physiquement et émotionnellement. Un stress prolongé peut conduire à une réduction de la satisfaction dans le travail, une baisse du moral, une baisse de l'enthousiasme pour le travail, des absences liées au travail, un désir de quitter la profession, et une mauvaise santé liée au stress.

Pourquoi le niveau de stress varie-t-il d'un enseignant a l'autre?

Le stress est déclenché par la façon dont l'enseignant perçoit la situation. En tant que telle, l'expérience du stress dépend du degré de confiance avec lequel l'enseignant pense être capable d'entreprendre des tâches importantes. Les enseignants diffèrent dans la façon dont ils perçoivent l'importance d'une tâche; ils diffèrent dans la confiance avec laquelle ils se sentent capables de remplir cette tâche efficacement; et ils diffèrent également dans leur façon de voir les conséquences potentielles de ne pas pouvoir accomplir la tâche avec succès.

Ainsi, la quantité de stress que subissent les enseignants dépend des types de pressions auxquelles ils font face, et de leurs attitudes envers ces pressions. Pour un enseignant donné, avoir à contrôler la discipline des élèves qui se comportent mal pourrait constituer une source de stress majeure. Pour un autre enseignant, ce serait d'essayer de finir les corrections à temps. Pour un autre encore, ce serait d'avoir à prendre des décisions difficiles de management qui pourraient affecter des collègues.

L'établissement a t-il une influence?

Enseigner dans un établissement où les enseignants rencontrent énormément de difficultés (par exemple beaucoup d'élèves très peu motivés, des ressources inadéquates), impliquera généralement plus de stress, mais ceci n'est pas toujours le cas. Parfois, enseigner dans une école ayant beaucoup d'élèves hautement motivés, et possédant de bonnes ressources, peut être très stressant si les parents et les chefs d'établissement attendent trop des enseignants. Les sources de stress précises ainsi que leur nombre varieront d'un établissement à l'autre. Cependant, même au sein du même établissement, les enseignants différeront énormément en termes des sources de stress qui les affectent personnellement.

Quelles sont les sources de stress principales auxquelles sont confrontés les enseignants?

Les enseignants ont chacun leur propre et unique profil de ce qui peut leur causer du stress. Toutefois, il y a généralement sept domaines qu'on considère couramment comme étant les sources principales du stress qui affectent les enseignants.

1. *Des élèves qui se conduisent mal.* Enseigner à des élèves qui se conduisent souvent mal est une source de stress majeure pour beaucoup d'enseignants.
2. *Des élèves qui ont des attitudes négatives envers le travail.* Pour beaucoup d'enseignants, le stress peut être causé par le simple effort qu'ils font pour essayer d'augmenter la motivation des élèves qui montrent peu d'intérêt pour le travail.
3. *De mauvaises conditions de travail.* Ceci comprend des problèmes tels que manquer de ressources adéquates, travailler dans un environnement physique défavorable, et avoir trop de travail à faire sans disposer d'assez de temps pour l'accomplir de façon satisfaisante.
4. *Un salaire inadéquat.* Des enseignants peuvent ressentir que le niveau de leur salaire n'est pas adéquat, compte tenu de leur niveau d'éducation, les compétences que leur travail implique, et les difficultés auxquelles ils font face.
5. *Une mauvaise ambiance de travail.* Certains enseignants rapportent qu'ils travaillent dans un établissement où le conflit entre les membres du personnel a lieu fréquemment, et où le niveau général du moral des instructeurs et des élèves est très bas.
6. *Le statut de la profession.* Bien que les enseignants soient généralement bien considérés par la société, il n'est pas rare de voir les gouvernements critiquer les enseignants et leur performance. Ceci peut faire sentir aux enseignants que leur statut a été sapé et déprécié.
7. *Faire face au changement.* La nature changeante du programme scolaire signifie que les enseignants doivent fréquemment modifier le contenu de ce qu'ils enseignent, leurs méthodes d'enseignement, et leurs méthodes d'évaluer et de noter le travail des élèves. En plus, il y a souvent des changements concernant la façon dont les écoles sont organisées, la manière dont les enseignants sont formés (à la fois avant et après le service), et le contexte légal qui régit leurs devoirs et leurs responsabilités. Faire face à un changement fréquent et rapide est une source majeure de stress.

> **"la quantité de stress que subissent les enseignants dépend des types de pressions auxquelles ils font face"**

Comment les enseignants font-ils face au stress?

Un enseignant peut attaquer le stress de deux façons principales. La première façon est d'utiliser des techniques à action directe et la seconde est d'utiliser des techniques palliatives. *Les techniques à action directe* consistent à identifier la source de stress et ensuite à prendre une action qui attaquera efficacement la source de stress. Par exemple, si la source de stress est un élève qui se comporte mal continuellement, l'enseignant aura besoin d'essayer de nouvelles stratégies en classe pour arrêter ce comportement. Si ces stratégies ne réussissent pas, l'enseignant pourra ensuite faire appel à des collègues, ou bien même faire des arrangements pour transférer l'élève dans une autre classe. Si la source de stress est d'essayer de finir les corrections à temps, l'enseignant pourra réarranger son planning concernant les devoirs qui nécessitent des corrections, et changer le temps réservé aux corrections. En général, l'action directe est la meilleure approche pour venir à bout du stress, parce qu'en fait elle se débarrasse de la source de stress. Une fois que le stress devient apparent, il est toujours prudent de l'affronter.

Cependant, il y a certaines sources de stress qui sont difficiles à maîtriser par action directe. Dans de telles circonstances, on a besoin d'utiliser des *techniques palliatives*. Les techniques palliatives ne traitent pas les sources de stress. Elles aident plutôt à minimiser l'effet du stress ressenti par l'enseignant. Les techniques palliatives peuvent être mentales ou physiques. Les techniques mentales impliquent un changement dans la façon dont l'enseignant voit la situation. La technique mentale la plus importante est de placer les problèmes dans leur vrai contexte. Dans l'enseignement, il est très facile d'attribuer des dimensions disproportionnées aux petits problèmes et d'exagérer leur importance. Voir un problème à sa juste valeur est l'action la plus importante et la plus efficace qu'un enseignant puisse prendre pour faire face au stress. Une autre technique utile est de garder le sens de l'humour, et de voir le côté humoristique d'une situation. Partager des problèmes avec son époux ou son épouse, un(e) collègue ou ami(e) peut être aussi très utile. Les techniques physiques consistent à aider le corps à se relaxer. Elles comprennent des exercices de relaxation qui permettent à l'enseignant d'empêcher les muscles de rester tendus pendant de longues périodes. Une autre technique utile est de faire régulièrement de l'exercice physique.

Que peuvent faire les enseignants pour surmonter leur propre stress?

Les enseignants doivent s'assurer qu'ils ne causent pas inutilement de stress à eux-mêmes en se fixant des espérances peu réalistes pour eux-mêmes et pour ce qu'ils peuvent réellement réaliser. Ils doivent aussi s'assurer qu'ils ne se créent pas inutilement des problèmes en ayant des modes de travail néfastes pour la santé, tels que donner trop de devoirs à la fois, garder les préparations et les corrections jusqu'à la dernière minute, et accepter facilement de faire du travail pour des collègues impliquant trop de travail supplémentaire ou des délais peu réalistes. Développer des capacités de gestion du temps efficaces est probablement l'unique et la plus importante chose qu'un enseignant puisse utiliser pour minimiser le stress.

Les enseignants doivent s'assurer qu'ils ont une vie saine et heureuse en dehors du travail. Devenir trop focalisé sur le travail rend l'enseignant trop vulnérable au stress quand des problèmes surviennent au travail. Avoir d'autres intérêts chez soi et dans sa vie privée peut rehausser l'ego personnel et l'estime de soi de l'enseignant. Tous les enseignants doivent se rappeler qu'ils doivent d'abord prendre soin de leur propre santé et de leur bonheur s'ils veulent être en mesure d'aider les autres.

Que peuvent faire les établissements scolaires?

Les établissements scolaires devraient repenser leurs modes de travail pour s'assurer que les enseignants ne sont pas confrontés à des surcharges de travail et à des problèmes qu'on pourrait éviter par une meilleure organisation et un meilleur planning. Par exemple, l'école devrait éviter beaucoup de charges supplémentaires arrivant toutes en même temps (telles que la soirée des parents d'élèves, les journées sportives, les délais des programmes). Les changements doivent être bien étudiés et le personnel doit avoir suffisamment de temps pour se préparer aux changements. Les établissements scolaires doivent aussi développer une atmosphère de soutien mutuel et un sens de camaraderie parmi le personnel. Un haut niveau de soutien social mutuel entre les membres du personnel et leur engagement à travailler ensemble est la meilleure et unique condition qui peut minimiser le stress.

Que peuvent faire les gouvernements?

Les gouvernements devraient éviter l'introduction, à court délai, de changements mal étudiés, basés sur une consultation et une implication inadéquates des enseignants, disposant de ressources insuffisantes, et qui, en grande partie, ignorent les difficultés pratiques liées à leur implémentation. Les gouvernements ont aussi besoin de développer un esprit et des attitudes qui les disposent à soutenir les enseignants dans leur travail, plutôt qu'à se plaindre et à critiquer. Les gouvernements ont donc l'obligation de s'assurer que les enseignants sont bien formés (aussi bien avant qu'après le service), qu'ils ont des ressources adéquates pour entreprendre le travail qu'on attend d'eux, et que le niveau de leur salaire est approprié à l'importance du travail; au niveau de l'éducation et de la compétence impliquées.

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Licences combinées: L'exemple de l'Université de Bristol

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Un nombre croissant d'étudiants, hormis ceux qui se destinent aux langues et lettres, choisissent aujourd'hui des universités leur permettant de faire des licences combinées avec une, voire deux langues étrangères. Il était donc clair, depuis la fin des années 80, qu'une université offrant un tel choix serait plus compétitive sur le plan du recrutement d'une population estudiantine voulant s'ouvrir les portes du marché de l'emploi européen. L'université de Bristol a très vite identifié ce créneau et a décidé de se donner les ressources nécessaires pour faire face à cette demande. C'est ainsi, qu'en 1991, le Centre de Langues ('Language Centre') de l'université de Bristol est né. La demande initiale est parvenue des facultés de science et d'ingénierie qui désiraient une formation pour leurs étudiants se destinant aux échanges Erasmus. L'idée était d'offrir les outils linguistiques qui leur permettraient à la fois de faire face aux situations de la vie quotidienne, comme chercher un logement ou ouvrir un compte en banque, qu'aux exigences de la vie universitaire et ainsi suivre des cours magistraux, prendre des notes etc. Donc, bien qu'à l'origine les licences combinées avec mention 'Etudes en Europe Continentale' étaient principalement l'apanage des étudiants de science et d'ingénierie, les ont rejoints aujourd'hui les étudiants de sociologie, d'économie et d'affaires et commerce. A l'heure actuelle notre centre offre quatre langues européennes, à savoir le français, l'allemand, l'espagnol et l'italien. Toutefois, la section de français a toujours connu les effectifs les plus élevés passant d'une soixantaine eu 1991 à prés de 200 en 1996.

ORGANISATION DES COURS

Les Modules

Le modèle appliqué au Centre de Langues de Bristol est le suivant. Tout d'abord, un niveau linguistique moyen de troisième ('GCSE Grade C') est requis pour être admis dans un module de français. L'enseignement est réparti sur les deux premières années d'études précédant le stade de la licence qui se passe dans une université française. Les modules représentent 3 heures d'enseignement par semaine sur toute l'année scolaire, plus 3 à 4 heures de travail autonome. En première année, autrement désignée comme le niveau 1, l'objectif d'ensemble est une remise à niveau comprenant le développement des connaissances grammaticales et l'extension du vocabulaire général. Sont aussi incorporés l'analyse et la mise en pratique des outils pédagogiques relatifs à la compréhension et l'expression écrites ainsi qu'à l'écoute et l'expression orale. Les thèmes couverts comprennent les fonctions de langue générale ainsi qu'une introduction aux aspects culturels et sociaux de la France contemporaine. En plus des éléments de communication générale, la deuxième année introduit les compétences nécessaires à la bonne insertion dans le milieu universitaire. Ces compétences couvrent différents aspects tels que la compréhension orale prolongée dans le cadre de cours magistraux, la prise de notes, l' exploitation de documents spécifiques, la compréhension et l'utilisation de termes spécifiques en autre par le truchement d'une présentation orale et d'un projet écrit. J'aimerais à ce stade donner quelques indications éclairants les points énoncés ci-dessus. Pour ce qui est de la compréhension de cours magistraux et de la prise de notes, nous avons établi une série de communications soit fournies par des collègues français ou francophones, soit par des étudiants de quatrième année revenant de leur année de stage, soit enfin par des étudiants effectuant leur échange Erasmus à l'université de Bristol. Les sujets présentés peuvent être de nature scolaire ou de nature pratique. Ces communications ont une grande valeur pédagogique car elles permettent aux apprenants d'exercer leur français en situation authentique. Il faut souligner que la présentation orale et le projet écrit sont deux aspects pivots du niveau 2 car c'est à travers de ces deux activités que l'apprenant va acquérir la majorité du vocabulaire spécifique à son domaine d'études. En ce qui concerne la présentation orale, celle-ci se fait en premier trimestre. Cette épreuve dure approximativement 15 minutes. Les étudiants sont encouragés à utiliser une variété de supports audiovisuels afin de rendre leur compte rendu le plus vivant et le plus clair possible. Ces derniers sont jugés sur les qualités de clarté et d'organisation de l'exposé mais aussi sur la bonne pratique des aspects paralinguistiques comme par exemple le contact visuel. Pour sa part, le projet écrit est un rapport d'environ 2000 mots basé sur l'exploitation de documents authentiques. Ce dernier doit aussi contenir des illustrations, graphiques ou tableaux permettant de clarifier les informations données. Il doit aussi contenir la liste complète des références utilisées ainsi qu'un glossaire expliquant les termes difficiles ou spécifiques contenus dans le rapport. Les sujets choisis couvrent des éléments aussi variés que les tremblements de terre, le chaos, la construction de ponts, les problèmes d'urbanisation, etc. En plus du travail de recherche et d'écrit que représente ce projet, celui-ci est aussi important car il constitue la base de la partie orale pour l'examen de fin d'année.

VALIDATION DES COURS

L'examen d'entrée

Les apprenants doivent passer un examen d'entrée ('Diagnostic Test') au début de l'année scolaire afin de pouvoir établir leurs connaissances linguistiques. Cet examen est divisé en deux parties. Tout d'abord, une section de grammaire avec 100 questions à choix multiple. Puis, une partie expression libre avec une dissertation d'environ 120 mots. Ce test est primordial car il permet l'organisation des groupes par niveau linguistique, créant ainsi des unités homogènes. En ce qui concerne la note finale pour les niveaux 1 et 2 celle-ci est attribuée en effectuant la moyenne du travail continu et l'examen final pour obtenir un score sur 100. Pour le niveau 1, le travail continu a pour base les quatre compétences linguistiques ayant chacune un poids égal. Pour le niveau 2, en sus des quatre fonctions de langue représentant 50% du travail continu, il faut aussi ajouter une note pour la présentation orale comptant pour 20% et 30% octroyé pour le projet écrit. L'autre partie de la note finale est bien entendu basée sur l'examen de fin d'année qui teste les quatre compétences linguistiques. En règle générale les activités comprises dans l'examen final sont introduites par ordre de difficulté croissante. Ainsi, pour les sections de compréhension écrite et orale celles-ci comprennent deux documents distincts qui permettent d'introduire cette distinction. Pour le niveau 1, la section expression écrite porte sur un sujet au choix qui peut être la rédaction d'une lettre ou d' un article d'environ 120 mots. Pour le niveau 2, cette activité consistera souvent à commenter un schéma ou un graphique. L'aboutissement de cette section est une dissertation d'un minimum de 300 mots. En dernier lieu, l'expression orale pour le niveau 1 sera basée sur un article court ou une illustration. Pour les étudiants du niveau 2 cette partie aura pour plate-forme le projet écrit rédigé pendant le deuxième trimestre. J'aimerais souligner que les documents sélectionnés pour l'examen final sont authentiques. Les articles utilisés peuvent provenir de sources diverses comme des brochures, des dépliants, des magazines hebdomadaires comme *le Point et L'Express* ainsi que des magazines de vulgarisation scientifique tels que *Sciences et Avenir, La Recherche, Eurêka, Science et Vie* etc. Les différentes chaînes de radio nationales, principalement *France Inter* et *Europe 1* nous servent de ressources pour nos documents sonores.

Un effort conscient a été fait afin de réduire le plus possible la subjectivité dans la notation. Ainsi sont utilisées des techniques comme les questions à choix multiple, textes à trous, choix de synonymes, antonymes, etc. L'idée étant que l'information donnée est indiscutablement correcte ou fausse. Pour l'expression écrite nous utilisons les descriptifs de compétences linguistiques initialement établis par Caroll (1980) dans le cadre de l'enseignement de l'Anglais Langue Etrangère. Cette réflexion nous semble importante car le problème de la subjectivité des corrections pour les langues vivantes est un écueil omniprésent. Nos modules ainsi que nos examens sont constamment révisés au vue des fiches d'évaluation que nos étudiants remplissent en fin du premier et deuxième trimestres. Les observations des formateurs et des facultés sont aussi prises en compte. De plus, les descriptifs des cours, examens et exemples de projets écrits sont envoyés à un examinateur externe. Nous sommes aussi soumis à divers contrôles de qualité internes et externes. Le HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) a procédé à plusieurs inspections pour lesquelles nous avons obtenu une mention spéciale.

RESSOURCES

Les apprenants sont encouragés à utiliser notre médiathèque où ils peuvent utiliser divers outils de EAO comprenant différents logiciels et CD Roms, l'internet et le Web. Un certain nombre d'étudiants utilisent les techniques d'apprentissage en tandem par le truchement du courrier électronique exploitant ainsi l'occasion de rentrer directement en contact avec des apprenants de langue maternelle soit en France, soit avec des étudiants français participant à l'échange Erasmus à Bristol. Sont aussi à la disposition de nos étudiants, des chaînes satellites ainsi que plusieurs chaînes de radio. De façon plus traditionnelle, ils peuvent avoir accès à plusieurs magazines généraux et scientifiques. Ces outils sont particulièrement favorisés dans le cadre du travail autonome.

METHODOLOGIE

L'enseignement prodigué au Centre de Langues est fait dans le cadre du Français Langue Etrangère. Nous appliquons en priorité l'approche communicative. Ainsi, nos apprenants sont exposés à un bain linguistique total car seule la langue cible est permise en cours. Dans un premier temps les étudiants sont surpris par cette approche, toutefois ils s'y habituent rapidement et finissent par l'apprécier comme l'indiquent les commentaires figurants sur les formulaires d'évaluation des cours remplis par ces derniers. Nos groupes de langue sont constitués de 10 à 12 participants. L'accent est mis sur la participation active des apprenants. Ceci est mis en pratique par l'utilisation d'activités comme la résolution de problèmes, la recherche d'informations, les jeux de rôles, les études de cas etc. Ces différentes techniques sont utilisées afin de rendre la communication entre participants la plus authentique possible en leur donnant un objectif à atteindre. Le travail autonome fait aussi partie intégrante de la réflexion didactique. En effet, la première session de l'année academique est consacrée à l'analyse des besoins afin que chaque étudiant puisse identifier les problèmes linguistiques qui leur sont personnels. A l'issu de cette réflexion ceux-ci remplissent un document que l'on a désigné sous le titre du 'contrat de l'apprenant' ou ils mettent sur papier leur problèmes linguistiques spécifiques et énoncent les activités qu'ils s'engagent à utiliser pour y remédier. Les étudiants s'engagent aussi à tenir un carnet de bord où ils font figurer les activités qu'ils ont entreprises. Ce carnet de bord est examiné de façon périodique afin que l'enseignant puisse aiguiller les étudiants en difficulté ou tout simplement suggérer des exploitations d'activités différentes. Cette pratique plaît beaucoup aux apprenants car ils peuvent travailler à leur rythme et se concentrer sur leurs points faibles. Ceci leur donne aussi le contrôle et la responsabilité de leur apprentissage linguistique. En dernier lieu, la communauté française à Bristol étant relativement importante, nous avons le luxe d'employer des linguistes qualifiés de langue maternelle. Ce dernier point est un atout important pour le recrutement des étudiants qui sont sensibles au caractère authentique et professionnel de nos modules de langues.

CHANGEMENT DE PERCEPTION

Le modèle décrit ci-dessus est l'aboutissement de 6 ans de réflexion et de remise en question permanente. Ce n'est dans aucun cas un modèle parfait ou figé et de nombreux changements vont vraisemblablement continuer à se faire. Il faut toutefois préciser que lors de notre création nous avons dû affronter un certain nombre de barrages. Tout d'abord, certains collègues de science et d'ingénierie nous percevaient comme des empêcheurs de tourner en rond. Les langues étaient considérées comme une caprice qui n'allait pas durer. De plus, le fait que les étudiants puissent passer plusieurs heures par semaine à étudier autre chose que leur sujet de spécialisation était perçu comme une perte de temps. Pendant l'année scolaire 1990/91 un sondage d'opinion avait été organisé pour cerner l'intérêt pour les langues vivantes parmi nos étudiants potentiels. Il en est ressorti que pour la majorité de ces derniers une langue vivante représentait un outil de promotion professionnelle ainsi que la possibilité de se familiariser avec une culture différente. L'étude d'une langue vivante leur donnait donc la chance d'élargir leurs horizons. Lorsque ces formulaires ont été présentés aux esprits sceptiques, ils ont dû se rendre à l'évidence que leurs nouvelles recrues ne voulaient pas être les laissés-pour compte de l'union européenne. Un autre problème majeur était bien sûr l'emploi du temps. Il nous a été proposé des choses insensées comme enseigner pendant le week-end ou après 18 heures. Il va sans dire que nous avons refusé toutes ces options car il nous semblait primordial que les unités de langues soient acceptées sur la même base que les autres options du cursus. Avoir accepté tout autre chose aurait donné un cachet défavorable aux cours que nous proposions. La première année de fonctionnement a été, entre autres choses, un travail d'affirmation du sérieux de nos modules, non seulement au sein des facultés impliquées, mais aussi auprès des étudiants eux-mêmes. En effet, certains d'entre eux arrivaient avec l'impression qu'un cours de langue allait représenter une option facile où il suffirait de venir bavarder en français deux fois par semaine afin d'obtenir les unités de valeur requises. Toutefois, la structure et le sérieux du travail requis ont vite fait de dissiper cette perception et les étudiants dilettants ont vite disparu. Un dernier élément toutefois n'a pas totalement changé. En effet le Centre de Langues est toujours perçu comme étant essentiellement un fournisseur de services. Ainsi, bien que nos cours soient intégrés dans les licences obtenues par nos étudiants nous restons toujours un partenaire externe pour chacune des facultés avec lesquelles nous traitons. Ceci a pour conséquence qu'il faut périodiquement réaffirmer la valeur et l'importance des langues modernes pour nos apprenants.

La valeur d'une langue vivante

L'AVENIR

Bien que les licences combinées mises sur pied par l'Université de Bristol fonctionnent bien et fassent désormais partie du paysage universitaire de notre institution, il est évident qu'il faut considérer d'autres modèles qui puissent s'appliquer aux exigences des diverses facultés. En effet, certaines d'entre elles ne peuvent pas intégrer dans leur cursus des cours sur deux années. Pour ce faire nous avons développé des modules de durée variable. Par exemple, à la requête de la faculté de médecine nous offrons des cours s'étalant sur 16 semaines à raison de 3 heures par semaine et qui sont évalués uniquement sur la base du travail continu. Une structure similaire est aussi appliquée pour les étudiants qui reviennent de leurs échanges à l'étranger. Ces cours ont un but spécifiquement professionnel où les participants étudient les techniques d'entretien, de négociation, de gestion du temps etc. Le but est de dépasser le cadre de l'apprentissage de la langue elle-même pour apprendre ou affiner des techniques de gestion et de communication transférables dans le monde du travail en général. Une autre formule qui pourrait voir le jour dans les années à venir à Bristol serait les 'IWLP' ('Institution-Wide Language Programmes') autrement dit des cours avec un tronc commun permettant d'offrir des modules de langue à contenu non spécifique. Cette formule aurait l'avantage d'être inter-facultés et d'offrir une solution alternative à nos cours sur mesure. Un questionnaire préliminaire a été distribué afin de jauger le potentiel de ce modèle, mais à l'heure actuelle les résultats ne sont pas encore connus.

Quoi qu'il en soit, il semblerait que les options de langues pour les 'étudiants d'autres disciplines' soient désormais un aspect fixe de notre université. Il va de soi que le Centre de Langues devra continuer à faire preuve de flexibilité et d'imagination afin de voir ses effectifs augmenter chaque année. La promotion des langues vivantes au sein de nos institutions universitaires en passe forcément par là. Toutefois, l'avenir semble être prometteur pour les Langues Etrangères Appliquées.

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WORKSHEET	WRITING TASK	SKILLS/GRAMMAR
31 Le parc d'attractions	Describing a visit to London	*past tense*
32 Ta ville	Reply to letter about your town	*picking out key words to adapt*
33 La montre cassée	Letter of complaint	*setting out a letter*
34 Les amis	Poem about ideal brother/sister or teacher	*adjectives*
35 Les transports en commun	Answering a letter about public transport	*expressing opinions*
36 Es-tu un bon témoin?	Describing an accident	*imperfect/perfect/pluperfect*
AREA D		
37 Un stage	Application form for work experience	*tips on form-filling*
38 Une télécopie importante	Fax messages	*adapting a text*
39 Le courrier éléctronique	Reply to an e-mail	*asking for details*
40 Une petite annonce	Small ad for a job	*redrafting, using a dictionary*
41 Une carte postale	Postcard about your work	*expressing opinions*
42 Au boulot	Job ad for a newspaper	*picking out key words*
43 L'interview	Preparing for interview (application letter)	*learning key words/phrases*
44 Le travail d'été	Job application letter	*answering questions*
45 Un journal	Completing a diary about work	*descriptions, rephrasing*
46 Au travail	Report about work experience	*past and present tenses*
47 Mon métier idéal	Article about ideal job	*picking out key expressions*
48 Le travail et l'argent	Reply to a letter from a friend	*opinions, planning a letter*
AREA E		
49 Starclub	Profile about a famous person	*researching information*
50 Une carte postale bizarre	Account of holidays	*past and future tenses*
51 Je fais du tourisme	Postcard about holiday	*positive/negative opinions*
52 L'hôtel	Publicity about hotel in your area	*picking out questions/answers*
53 Comment y aller?	Fax about transport	*enlivening answers*
54 Le camping	Letter to campsite	*adapting a text, questions*
55 L'environnement	Poster about the environment	*copywriting*
56 Mon pays	Letter about your country	*picking out key expressions*
57 Les dernières vacances	E-mail about school holiday	*preparing and redrafting*
58 Fumeur ou non fumeur?	Article on views about smoking	*expressing opinions*
59 Les enfants	Discussion of nationality	*interviewing*
60 Une recette poétique!	Poem about ideal friends	*using a format to write*

© ALL French Writing Activities for KS4/S3-4

Je suis délégué de classe

8

Aix-en-Provence, le 29 septembre

Cher Darren,

Salut! C'est dur, la rentrée, hein? Pour toi aussi?

Quoi de neuf? Nous avons eu des élections en classe et moi, je suis le nouveau délégué! Tu te souviens de Natasha? La fille avec qui tu as beaucoup dansé à la disco? Elle a été élue aussi! Vous avez des délégués de classe en Angleterre? Dans notre collège, il y en a deux par classe et nous devons représenter tous les élèves de notre classe auprès des profs et de l'administration. Quelle responsabilité! Il faut dire que je suis fier de mon rôle et je suis content de travailler avec Natasha.

Hier, c'était le premier conseil de classe. Natasha et moi, nous avions discuté de plein de choses avec nos camarades de classe et nous avions une longue liste de propositions. Au début de la réunion, j'avais peur de donner mon avis et mon opinion, mais les profs et le directeur étaient gentils et voulaient nous écouter.

On a discuté du manque d'activités en dehors des cours et on a proposé de créer un club de poterie et de photo. On a suggéré aussi de cultiver des plantes et des fleurs dans la cour, parce que c'est un endroit plutôt triste pour le moment. Notre classe aimerait aussi organiser une disco pour Noël et on pourrait envoyer l'argent recueilli à une œuvre charitable pour le tiers monde.

Le prof de dessin va étudier notre proposition pour les clubs et un groupe de la classe va travailler avec l'intendant pour choisir des plantes. Le directeur a bien aimé notre idée pour la disco et il va nous donner quelques dates possibles. Alors, notre premier conseil de classe a réussi!

Natasha et moi, nous devons maintenant en parler avec la classe. Qu'est-ce que tu fais au collège? Tu t'amuses bien? Écris-moi vite!

Ton correspondant,

Alberto

---

1 **Trouvez des mots dans la lettre.**

a Après les vacances d'été, c'est la ♟

b Quand les élèves doivent choisir les délégués, il y a une ♟ en classe.

c Un élève qui doit représenter sa classe auprès des profs et de l'administration est ♟ de classe.

d Le rôle de délégué est plein de ♟

e Une réunion entre les délégués, les profs et l'administration s'appelle un ♟

f Alberto avait noté les suggestions de ses camarades. Il avait une ♟

---

2 **Résumez en anglais les trois suggestions de la classe d'Alberto.**

★ **Imaginez que vous êtes délégué(e) de classe. Faites une liste de propositions pour votre collège.**

1. Plus de choix à la cantine

Un profil scolaire

1 Tu vas écrire ton profil scolaire (c'est comme ton Record of Achievement).

a Lis le Profil Scolaire. Souligne les mots que tu connais.

b Cherche les autres mots dans le dictionnaire.

c Regarde la section *Qualités*. Coche les phrases qui te décrivent bien.

d Ecris deux phrases positives et deux phrases négatives sur toi.

e Relie une phrase positive avec une phrase négative.
Exemple: *Je suis patient(e) mais je n'ai pas d'imagination.*

f Qu'est-ce que tu penses de tes progrès à l'école? Ecris trois phrases (regarde les expressions utiles).

g Fais une liste de tes centres d'intérêt. Ecris trois phrases (regarde les expressions utiles).

h Fais une liste de tes matières à l'école (maths, histoire, français). Coche si tu es fort(e) ou assez fort(e).

i Remplis le profil scolaire (page 4) en utilisant tes notes.

Profil Scolaire

Nom: Pierre Bleu
Classe: 10 S
Ecole: St-Marie, Annecy

QUALITÉS

Je suis très travailleur – j'adore le travail. Je suis bien organisé et je suis perfectionniste. Je suis assez paresseux et chez moi, je ne fais jamais la vaisselle.

CENTRES D'INTÉRÊT

Pour moi, la mode est très importante. Je suis très indépendant. Le football m'intéresse mais l'année dernière je me suis cassé le pied en jouant alors je ne joue plus. J'aime aussi lire et écouter de la musique.

SUCCÈS

Il y a longtemps, j'ai remporté le trophée du meilleur joueur de football de l'école. A l'école, je suis fort en maths et sciences.

▼ EXPRESSIONS UTILES ▼

A QUALITÉS
Je suis
  bien organisé(e)
  patient(e)
  réaliste
  optimiste
  perfectionniste
Je respecte les autres.
J'ai le sens de l'humour.
Je travaille bien en équipe.

Je ne suis pas ...
Je n'aime pas ...
Je ne travaille pas ...
Je n'ai pas ...

B CENTRES D'INTÉRÊT
Je suis passionné(e) par ...
Pendant mon temps libre, je ..
Le football est ma passion.
J'adore ...
Mon passe-temps préféré, c'est....

C SUCCÈS
A l'école, je suis fort(e) en ...
Ma matière préférée, c'est ...
Je fais beaucoup de progrès en ...

D OPINIONS
Je trouve ...
  utile
  facile
  fatigant
  amusant
  ennuyeux
A mon avis, ... est
A mon avis, ... n'est pas

© ALL French Writing Activities for KS4/S3–4

L'année scolaire

Donne ton opinion. Coche (✓) la bonne réponse. Puis lis la lettre pour vérifier tes réponses.

En France, les vacances d'été durent
1 mois ☐
2 mois ☐
3 mois. ☐

A Noël, les vacances durent
2 semaines ☐
3 semaines ☐
4 semaines. ☐

Issoire, le 24 juin

Chère Nathalie
Merci pour ta lettre. C'était intéressant. Ce week-end je suis allée à la piscine avec ma copine. La piscine ici est très moderne et il y a des toboggans. C'est super! Tu aimes la natation? Moi, j'aime beaucoup.

Au collège, ma matière préférée, c'est la géographie. Aujourd'hui je vais répondre à ta question sur l'année scolaire en France.

En France, l'année scolaire a 36 semaines. On commence en septembre et termine au début du mois de juillet. Dans une semaine je serai en vacances!!! Les vacances d'été durent deux mois.

En tout, les vacances scolaires durent trois mois. Nous avons une semaine de vacances à la Toussaint, en novembre, et deux semaines pour Noël et le jour de l'an. En plus, chaque collège a une semaine en février ou en mars.

A la rentrée au mois de septembre, mon frère Alexandre va entrer au collège. En France les élèves entrent au collège à 11 ans, en classe de sixième. On reste 4 ans au collège, de la sixième à la troisième. L'année prochaine je serai en troisième.

J'adore les vacances. Pendant l'année scolaire, j'ai 26 heures de cours par semaine, et les devoirs à la maison en plus! Pendant les vacances, je peux faire ce que je veux. Avec ma famille, nous allons à la montagne.

La prochaine fois, écris-moi quelque chose sur l'année scolaire dans ton pays. C'est intéressant de comparer.

C'est tout pour aujourd'hui! Ecris-moi vite,
ta copine

Amélie
xxx

---

1 Lis la lettre. Complète les phrases.

a En France l'année scolaire dure ★ semaines.
b L'année commence en ★
c L'année se termine en ★
d A quel âge entre-t-on au collège en France? Quand on a ★ ans.
e Au collège, la première classe s'appelle ★
f La dernière classe s'appelle ★
g Amélie a ★ heures de cours par semaine.

---

2 Et toi? Complète les phrases.

a J'ai ★ heures de cours par jour.
b J'ai ★ heures de cours par semaine.
c La pause-déjeuner dure ★ minutes.
d Pour moi, l'année scolaire commence en ★
e L'année se termine en ★
f On entre dans mon collège à l'âge de ★ ans.
g Ma classe s'appelle ★

★ Ecris une lettre à Amélie (ou à un(e) correspondant(e)).
Décris l'année scolaire de ton collège.

Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 23–27

Video Ergo Sum: a learning package from French satellite TV

Margaret E Ross
Glasgow Caledonian University

THE BACKGROUND

A recent chance budget surplus in our Faculty's Teaching and Learning Fund gave me the opportunity to work on French satellite TV news programmes for a video project I had had in mind for some time. The video tapes, produced by colleagues in other institutions, and which we had been using for many years, were well made and had proved a useful source of materials for our students, but they were generally theme based, all from metropolitan France and the accompanying materials consisted typically of transcripts of the tapes and a selection of material on the same subject from the written media. My particular interest lay in a closer look at the information that could be gleaned from TV broadcasts about the culture of various francophone countries, of course including France.

More and more, cultural elements are seen as necessary to the study of modern foreign languages. We, as language teachers, are aware that it is not enough to equip the students with a good knowledge of the sound system of a language, its syntax and a wide range of vocabulary, we feel the necessity to give the students information about and a feeling for, the 'culture' – whatever that may be defined as – of the country whose language they are studying. As students' difficulties with the comprehension of texts are often due to the cultural references found therein – a recent example I came across was a text, to be summarised into English, containing a reference to PMU – it is essential that students be given an understanding of this aspect of language study (Nott, 1995).

The bulk of our language work at Glasgow Caledonian University is carried out within the Faculty of Business; our two main degrees are situated there and when each of these degrees was in the planning stage, colleagues who run the programmes, specifically asked us to provide 'business' language. We do give the students practice in commercial language, allied to the learning of a range of commercial techniques, but we have always included in our language courses a high background and cultural content: one of the aims of our classes being to improve not only the students' knowledge of the structures of the language, but also to introduce them to a range of socio-cultural aspects of the country whose language they are studying. Commercial texts, background information and cultural awareness all overlap in the language. The latter two in particular feed each other, since, for example, when the environment in France is being discussed, it is necessary to explain why the nuclear energy debate has, until the testing at Muraroa at least, aroused very little negative passion in France. This applies to students who arrive with a Higher pass in the language in their first year and who stay with us for four years in all. For those students who are taking language options for a shorter time – perhaps only one or two semesters – we cannot do much more than give them a glimpse of some of the more evident cultural traits (hopefully avoiding stereotypes), to underline that there is a difference between their home culture and the foreign one and that the former should not automatically be regarded as superior to the latter.

Highly rated business language

TV5's regular broadcast of news programmes in French from countries other than metropolitan France, seemed an ideal starting point for collecting of suitable materials for this project. Although textbooks recently have attempted to show culture in francophone countries other than France, the treatment of these is often perfunctory. Part of the aim behind this project was to show the students that in these other francophone countries, people had a different world view from that encountered in France, but an equally valid viewpoint. This can, of course, be conveyed to students verbally, but the impact of the video film is infinitely more forceful: this is not just teacher going on as usual, but these people on the screen are acting and reacting differently. This is not to diminish the role of the teacher in explaining cultural differences, after all, most of us have spent at least a year in a French speaking country and have absorbed much of the culture along with our language competence. Equally, most of us try on an anecdotal basis anyway, to transmit this knowledge to our students.

Although I would also liked to have looked at cultural differences within France, time constraints meant that this was not possible on this occasion. However, there were several extracts from metropolitan French programmes, for instance on *l'immigration clandestine* that could form a separate section and indeed, may form the basis of another video package at a future date.

USING TV5 BROADCASTS

The Bureau linguistique in Glasgow had been providing me regularly with photocopies of TV5's *Grille des Emissions* to enable prerecording of broadcasts, as this Grille allowed for the careful elaboration of a complete schedule of recording, over several evenings if necessary. When I was ready to implement such a schedule, I received the latest edition of the *Grille des Emissions* to be met by the paragraph that in response to the wishes of and comments from their viewers, TV5 had not only completely rescheduled many of their programmes, but had decided to reduce the frequency of news broadcasts from francophone countries other than metropolitan France, so there were no longer regular daily news programmes from Switzerland, Belgium and Canada.

This apparent setback turned out, in retrospect, to have very positive consequences for the project and in the long run for the students. The original intention had been to tape news programmes dealing with topics of specifically French significance which received wide international coverage, such as the French presidential elections, nuclear testing, major paralysing strikes, and then to compare and contrast the presentation and content of these news items as they were dealt with on metropolitan France's television networks, and those of Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec. Then as a secondary part of the original scheme, I had planned to look at items of less significance internationally, but important within the linguistic and cultural communities concerned. It turned out to be this latter aspect that won out, to the extent of virtually eliminating the first.

The drawback to the original idea was that no matter how good the news broadcast is or how ingenious the accompanying materials are, the subject dates fairly quickly. The finished tape would have been acceptable during the following academic session, but not much beyond that; students who are now able to watch international news as it happens, thanks to terrestrial and satellite TV and who are as up-to-date as possible on their various fields of interest with the help of Internet, are often less than patient with materials that they perceive as dated. Fortunately, there was still a wide range of programmes being shown on TV5 that originated in francophone countries other than France, and I was able to choose from a wide range of different broadcasts: from Quebec fashion programmes like *Perfecto*, through *Au nom de la Loi* a Belgian legal programme, to *Tell Quel* a Swiss consumer programme. From the point of view of the package that was finally produced, there were two main advantages in this new approach, forced on me by circumstances: a variety of presentation styles, talking heads, outdoor film, and much more cultural information than would have emerged from the news broadcasts alone.

At the outset of this project, there was no absolute guarantee, even with the help of the *Grille des Emissions*, that a programme would be broadcast at the time indicated. Part of the reason for this was that these information sheets were published several weeks in advance and obviously times could be altered as could the content of programmes. This could lead to serendipitous moments, but more usually when the tape was plucked eagerly from the video the following morning, instead of the planned broadcast from Antenne 2, there was something quite different on the tape, such as a football match transmitted in its entirety. Leaving aside the debate about football as culture, the point is that initially TV5 was not a very reliable resource. After this uncertain start however, it has proved to be a really valuable asset to the teacher of French. Now they send out their *Grille des diffusions* with the complete programming schedules and a very useful looseleaf binder to allow teachers to build up a selection of documents which arrive on a regular basis, containing not only a wealth of details about forthcoming programmes, particularly their new educational broadcasts, but a great deal of information about other useful sources for French teachers (*Apprendre et enseigner*; *Quelques idées simples pour apprendre et enseigner avec TV5*; also programmes with *fiches d'exploitation pédagogique* and programmes available on video, again with exploitation pédagogique).

The advantages to be gained from using these materials are numerous: they are prepared by experts, they are well presented, they save an enormous amount of time and they have so far proved to be accurate in a way the original *Grille des Emissions* was not. Incidentally, there is also a list of local TV5 correspondents who will offer additional help when needed.

Information about TV5 programmes can also be obtained through the France Media network on email and at TV5's own interesting site on the Net (http://www.tv5.org/fr.inte.plan.html). Browsing here will lead to such areas as 'Ressources francophones', 'Enseignement du français', 'TV5 chez vous' and many more.

CHOOSING THE FILM EXTRACTS

Over a four week period, I chose a selection of programmes from various francophone countries, ending up with fifteen three hour tapes, then set myself the task of transcribing the extracts I had decided would be of most interest to our students. I decided to exploit the taped materials on three levels to be used with different groups of students:

- *students in the first year of a European business programme and who already had a Higher grade pass in the language*. These students have little or no first hand experience of the country – possibly a school visit or family holidays – but they are spending all or part of their third year studying at university in a French speaking country. In our teaching at this level, the primary aim is to improve the learner's linguistic competence. However, since "Language is culture and culture is language; one cannot teach one without involving the other" (Wright, 1996: 37), there is clearly a leaching of culture into the language learning process. My intention was to make this more deliberate and not leave it to what the students happened to pick up on the way through. I chose particular excerpts which were lively and possibly younger in tone and approach, than some of the more heavyweight material I collected.
- *students who have already completed a year of their degree programme and who are preparing to set off on their year abroad*. The materials I used here were in part geared to cultural differences, not this time between francophone countries, but mostly between France and Britain. The cultural slant to the worksheets is appreciated by this group who are looking forward, possibly with some trepidation, to their year studying in a foreign university. In the past we have had the occasional complaint from students, through the medium of the Annual Course Board Report, that they felt they were not adequately prepared for their stay in the foreign country. This applied less to the language aspects of their course than to the culture shock some of them experienced when they arrived in France or Belgium. I therefore grouped certain short film extracts under this very title *Le choc culturel* and included in them such items as the *Météo* from metropolitan French TV, done in a way that seems quite different from the relatively staid weather information we see on BBC and ITV; as well as a film of a BCBG Parisian lady popping into a *traiteur's* and ordering a complete romantic meal for two. Not quite the same as popping into the local Chinese restaurant for a takeaway.
- *students who have spent a period of time in a French speaking country*. These students are expected to be more sensitive to the language and to the cultural differences shown on the tapes. They appreciate nuances in these film extracts, not initially apparent to students from the two earlier levels, and as they have now gained some experience of the culture of a French speaking country, they are better able to contrast cultural differences between the various francophone countries. In many ways, as Nott points out in 'Linguistic competence and sociocultural studies': "...the main barrier which has been surmounted [by students during their year abroad] is a cultural one." (Nott, 1995: 69).

However, even spending time abroad is no guarantee of absorption of culture. Different factors appear to influence this: clearly the length of time spent in the foreign country has a major part to play: our students who return after one semester show neither the improvement in language nor the grasp of culture shown by those students fortunate enough to spend a complete academic year studying at a foreign university. Different circumstances also play an important role here. Our students are either in a hall of residence, flat sharing with English speakers/French speakers, or staying with a French family. Not surprisingly, those who stay with the family normally acquire the best grasp of the culture of the country, although often we have most difficulty in persuading students to accept this type of accommodation.

THE VIDEO PACKAGE

The work was held up initially by two main difficulties: one technical to do with satellite reception, the other financial to do with getting hold of the promised funding. Once these problems were overcome, the only remaining hurdle was convincing colleagues to let me have exclusive use of the satellite system for a four week period in order to let me record the widest selection possible of programmes.

The choice of extracts was influenced by several different factors: the subject matter being broadcast; the clarity of the soundtrack; the possibility of exploiting the material further either for language or cultural ends. The initial work of transcription was relatively straightforward, though very time-consuming. In addition to this time spent transcribing texts of the extracts chosen and deciding what cultural aspects to highlight/feature, much thought also had to be given to devising ways of exploiting the films.

Having worked with a wide selection of videos over the years, I had certain ideas about what pitfalls to avoid. Sometimes it is not clear from the title what a particular tape extract is about; sometimes the material is not very well divided and it can be difficult to find the appropriate place on the tape – particularly embarrassing if you have to do this while the class is sitting in anticipation of a video show. I therefore wanted each segment of film to have a title, an indication of the type of programme involved and instant information as to what French speaking country the programme had come from. The technician and I devised a series of graphics for the video cassette which started with some French sounding music, then showed the flags of the various countries from which the programmes had been broadcast. At the beginning of each different segment, there was a title: for example *La grippe en Suisse* followed by a short summing up of the type of programme to expect – *Journal d'Informations*; the date and in the corner the flag of the country to emphasise that this was a Swiss French broadcast. This limited preparation, even though it lasts a relatively short time on the screen, helps the students to focus in quickly on the subject. If one of the questions to be answered relates to the country of origin of the film, the 'front page' can be used simply as a guide to the teacher and not shown to the students.

A further consideration was the length of the taped segment: students' concentration time is becoming more and more limited as far as watching videos is concerned, partly because to them TV is such an everyday object; they are used to eating, talking and working with a constant background of television noise, so asking them to concentrate on a television broadcast can be difficult. The most successful segments were those which lasted less than five minutes for the first group of students and no more than 15 minutes for the more advanced group.

The package is grouped by categories of materials, under broad headings, as broad as possible since the intention here was to include materials on related topics from different francophone countries. A category as general as *La vie politique*, for example, allowed a grouping of such film extracts as *Dur, dur de militer*: about the trials and tribulations (like rival flyposting) that a group of militant political supporters have to endure: the self- explanatory *L'histoire de l'isoloir*, and *Une candidate féministe aux présidentielles*. I also included in this category two news extracts, one from France, one from Swiss TV, about Marie Curie's ashes being removed to the Panthéon. *La cuisine* includes a traditional French recipe for duck from *La Cuisine des Mousquetaires*; *L'aromate de Montréal* about oils and herbs; a Swiss broadcast on *La fabrication du kirsch* and a recipe for cooking caterpillars from Burkina Faso.

A certain number of programmes have accompanying transcriptions, but at the same time a conscious decision was made not to transcribe others. This was partly due to the length of the extracts in question, but it was also partly to add variety. The programme extracts with transcribed texts form part of a self access package for students; the students are given a set of instructions, a tape, a worksheet and finally, a copy of the transcript for the purposes of self correction.

The worksheets which accompany the videos vary according to the student group they are designed for. For the first group of students indicated earlier, worksheets are designed mainly to elicit information, since the students' knowledge about francophone countries outside metropolitan France is minimal, so questions here are designed to show whether students have understood the facts and the language of the film extract. (I didn't use the Quebec broadcasts here, since pronunciation can be a major a barrier to understanding for students at this level.) For the students in the second group, worksheets include questions such as "Write down any clues which indicate that this is not metropolitan France. What clues indicate where the film is set?". Questions of a factual nature are normally in English at these two levels, but are in French for the students in the third group, since virtually all of their class work is conducted in the target language. All worksheets contain some questions designed to provoke discussion, both oral and written.

For students in the third group (and available for our Post-graduate students if they wish), in addition to the self-access packages, there are some longer videos without transcriptions. This is to allow the students to take if not a *bain linguistique* then certainly a *douche linguistique*. It can be argued that students at this level should be watching 'live' satellite broadcasts, but the complications of trying to find appropriate and interesting programmes at the same time as language classes are timetabled has for the moment defeated us. The video allows the students to work in small groups and use playback facilities to check any parts of the programme that may have caused them difficulties. This is particularly important when accents that are unfamiliar to the students are being used.

CONCLUSIONS

This first year is being used for piloting and evaluation of the video materials. If it proves successful with the present cohort of students, the materials will be tidied up and put into final presentation form in which it will then be available to colleagues.

The main reactions I hope to obtain are to the worksheets; when my colleague and I did a similar pilot project with worksheets for an audio package *Parlez après le bip sonore*, we were often surprised at discrepancies thrown up between what our intentions were when writing a question and the students' interpretation(s) of that same question.

A bonus in this project was that thanks to the occasional inconsistencies between the expected broadcast indicated in the *Grille des diffusions* and the programme that was in fact shown, I also managed to find enough material on scientific and technological subjects which should be the content of yet another video in the future.

Last minute information

So far, what has emerged is the students' interest in seeing different countries where French is spoken and hearing, possibly even beginning to recognise, different accents. The film extracts have appeared to be a revelation to some students; although aware intellectually that French is spoken in countries other than metropolitan France, they did not relate this fact to people, on film, doing ordinary things, telling jokes, reading the news, talking about pop music or fashion. Their most extreme reaction was, not surprisingly, to listening to an African commentator describing the delights we were watching on screen of the preparation and cooking of a nourishing meal of caterpillars: whether the reaction was to the French or the chenilles I'm not certain!

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Notes for Contributors

Contributions

The Editorial Committee welcomes previously unpublished articles, reports and other contributions, which will further the cause of the learning and teaching of French. Contributions are expected to fall into one of these categories:

(a) Articles of about 3000 words.
(b) Brief (up to 1000 words) items of information, notes on innovative practice, discussion points (including those arising from previous articles).
(c) Reviews usually of about 300 to 400 words (but longer reviews or review articles may also be accepted). Please send your contributions direct to the Reviews Editor.

The guidelines below are intended to help contributors:

Presentation

Type with double spacing.

Please give your article one title only, not a title and a sub-title, and divide it up with (short) sub-headings. An abstract of about 50 words should be provided.

Give full references for all sources quoted, using the Harvard system. In the text the author's name, year of publication and page number where relevant should be quoted in brackets, e.g.: (Jones,1993, 27).

Please send three copies of the article and keep another for yourself.

Clean copy and articles supplied with IBM or Macintosh compatible disc (MS Word preferred) are of great assistance in reducing printing costs. Graphs, pie charts and other diagrams should be supplied as camera ready, hard copy. If prepared on a computer, graphics files on disk are also of use, presented as TIF or postscript files.

Illustrations

Photographs are particularly welcome, as are charts, diagrams and tables where relevant. Please send these at the same time as your typescript.

Timing

In order to be considered for inclusion in the following issue, articles should normally be sent in by Ist December and Ist June. Where topicality is of the essence, shorter deadlines are possible by negotiation with the Editor.

Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 28–32

Advanced CALL[*] to WALL[†]

Liam Murray
University of Warwick

INTRODUCTION

Language software tools

There exists a plethora of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) packages which are designed to meet the needs of French learners up to GCSE level and of adult beginner and intermediate learners. Some of these packages are good, some bad and many are indifferent, whereas for A-level, Scottish Higher and equivalent levels there are very few decent CALL products. This article aims to provide a summative yet critical review of several of these packages that purport to cater for advanced level learners and it will also offer ideas to teachers on using and integrating other sources of electronically-based materials for higher-level teaching purposes. These include designated multimedia programs and the much-hyped Web, which looks promising in delivering a form of Web-Assisted Language Learning (WALL).

When duly considered, some of the reasons for the dearth of advanced level CALL materials quickly become evident. There are few commercial developers of CALL software because the market for these products is much smaller and less focussed than the GCSE market from the point of view of language and the spread of topics covered. Post-16 students are expected to study a variety of topics that are as up-to-date as possible and in much greater depth than at previous levels. These topics range from the very specific to the distinctly nebulous. From a CALL design point of view, because the skills required for higher-level language learning are more specialised than at GCSE level, the amount of research, time and effort required on the part of the developers to produce an advanced learning package is therefore much greater. Developers aiming at this market must themselves be more dedicated and focussed on their end product, with heavy emphasis on the pedagogical research and appropriateness of the materials offered than those preparing general and lower-level CALL products.

SOME GENERAL CALL FOR PRE-16 LEARNERS

Most language teachers will already be familiar (to a greater or lesser degree) with at least some of these general language software 'tools'. A brief and cursory look into several of the software catalogues, (see appendix), will reveal repeated references to packages such as *Global French* (or *German* or *Spanish* or *Italian*), *Teacher's PET* (with a recent version claiming to stretch to advanced level vocabulary learning), *Fun with Texts* (which can claim to cover higher-level topics), *Directions 2000* (see *Francophonie* No.11 June 1995 for a positive review by E. Pawling on the practical use of this CD-ROM in a classroom), *Écoutez Bien, En Route, Apprenez le Français avec le Fils d'Asterix, French Encounters, Ça sonne Français*, and the *Think and Talk Series* for conversational practice. There are, of course, lots of language software games, e.g. *Who is Oscar Lake?* This material covers essentially the same vocabulary and represents mainly transactional situations. The National Council for Educational Technology (NCET) also offers a large but as of yet uncritical listings of many CALL packages on their website (see appendix). These listings as well as other useful and practical information are also available by post.

SOME GENERAL CALL FOR ADVANCED LEARNERS

What is available therefore for teachers at post-16 level to use on the classroom PCs? There are a number of electronic dictionaries and encyclopaedias on the commercial market. The *Oxford Superlex Electronic Dictionary* (see appendix for details on possible commercial contacts for most of the software mentioned here) is based on the recent *Oxford-Hachette Bilingual Dictionary*, is very user friendly and includes clickable buttons on the usual dictionary elements such as verb tables, English and French phonetics and lexical items. It also has excellent search and search history facilities with a standard print option. It is remarkably reasonably priced compared to other dictionaries and knowledge compendiums. At the other end of the scale, an electronic edition of the nine-volume *Grand Robert de la Langue Française* has been around for several years, contains similar features to the *Oxford Superlex* in addition to offering a huge searchable quotations and synonyms database, but would be too expensive for most, if not all secondary schools and FE colleges. Notwithstanding the issue of cost, electronic dictionaries remain popular, fast, networkable and very useful to students at all levels of language learning[1] and of course, can be used to develop dictionary skills in a modern medium in accordance with one of SCAA's *Principles for Syllabus Construction*:

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[*] CALL: Compuer Assisted Language Learning
[†] WALL: Web Assisted Language Learning

> "A/AS syllabuses in a Modern Foreign Language should: ... (f) encourage sensible use of dictionaries".[2]

The chosen medium then, is left to the teachers (and to the budget managers).

Specialist encyclopaedias can also be quite useful for teachers and their students as they attempt to follow the AEB Advanced level syllabus[3] stipulation which demands that knowledge is required of:

> "... the contemporary culture of the country and its society through the study of selected topic areas".

Such knowledge can be found in, for example:

- *Le Monde sur CD-ROM*: contains the full text of the daily newspaper (over 40,000 articles in all with annual updates), search functions, illustrations, maps, drawings and graphs. In a generally positive review of this software, M.-N. Guillot concludes:

  > "As a cumulative resource, it is indeed an invaluable asset. But if the year-by-year update of what is, after all, a single source database, is felt to be too financially taxing, a one-year disc will still provide plenty of scope for challenging linguistic investigations."[4]

- *L'Histoire au jour le jour*: is another very similar searchable database from the publishing house of *Le Monde*, this time covering major world stories from 1939 to 1996 (so no updates needed – yet) with sound and video recordings also included;
- *Atlas de France*: offers accumulated economic, demographic and social data on France and is indexed by region, department, canton and commune.
- *De Gaulle, un Géant dans l'histoire*: is relatively inexpensive (around 350FF) and yet contains a thoroughly researched biography of the General that makes extensive use of current multimedia capabilities. As a recent reviewer said of it:

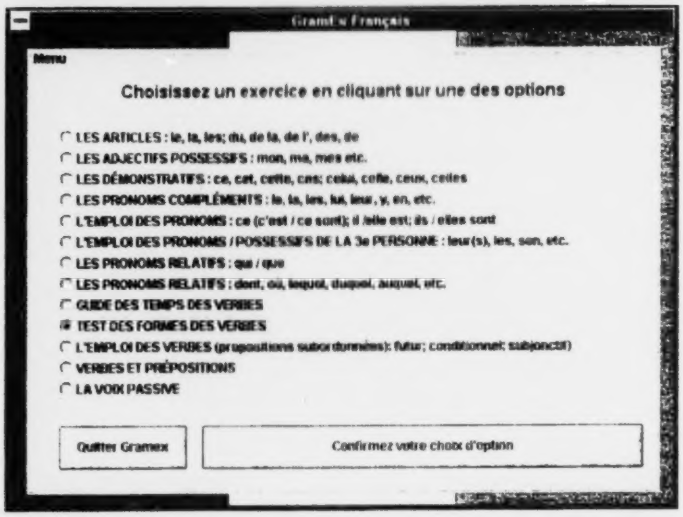
  > "Dans ce cadre précis, [de la biographie] le CD-Rom est parfait. Une séquence de 3 heures, divisée en multiples sections, raconte sa vie de A à Z, chacune renvoyant aux iconographies et biographies associées, à des extraits de presse et à une chronologie détaillée - ces éléments sont accessibles thématiquement".[5]

SOME SPECIFIC A-LEVEL CALL

Several dedicated CALL packages can help teachers in covering 4 out of the 5 assessment objectives that are described in the Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate document[6] (the single absence being due to the fact that current software cannot yet provide: '... a sustained spoken interchange in the target language'[7]).

A selection of good CALL products would include:

- *Courrier*: which offers 150 cloze-type exercises aimed at specific areas such as business French with some grammar work;
- *Fun with Texts*: an older and popular program but steadfast and pedagogically sound which offers cloze-type, gapfill and text-jumbling exercises with an easy-to-use authoring facility for teachers to produce their own texts and as mentioned earlier, it can justly claim to reach advanced level standard;
- *Bonaccord*: which is for English to French translation;
- *TransIT Tiger French*: which comes from the Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) Consortium, is a taxing yet effective translation tool with a hypertext help for students and an authoring facility for tutors but the translation topics, though generally interesting, may be rather specialised for some students who are not specifically dealing with these contemporary issues, e.g. 'French Defence', 'French Budget'; 'New Architectural Developments' and who are not following a translation course;
- *GramEx*: which is also from the TELL Consortium, is, unlike its stablemate (see Figure 1). *GramDef*,[8] highly suited to A-level grammar revision and teaching, using variations of gapfilling exercises (although with no authoring facility as of yet). Only one attempt at each gapfill is allowed and then the answer is given with an explanation. It does, however, contain a good range of grammar topics as can be seen from the inset photograph. During a two-hour induction course which was carried out recently using French and German versions of *GramEx*, colleagues intending to teach first year undergraduates with these packages reported the



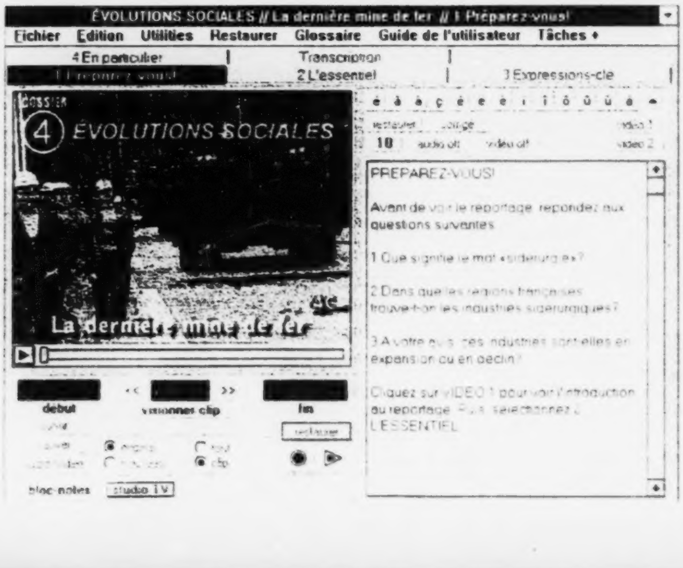
Choisissez un exercice en cliquant sur une des options

○ LES ARTICLES : le, la, les; du, de la, de l', des, de
○ LES ADJECTIFS POSSESSIFS : mon, ma, mes etc.
○ LES DÉMONSTRATIFS : ce, cet, cette, ces; celui, celle, ceux, celles
○ LES PRONOMS COMPLÉMENTS : le, la, les, lui, leur, y, en, etc.
○ L'EMPLOI DES PRONOMS : ce (c'est / ce sont); il /elle est; ils / elles sont
○ L'EMPLOI DES PRONOMS / POSSESSIFS DE LA 3e PERSONNE : leur(s), les, son, etc.
○ LES PRONOMS RELATIFS : qui / que
○ LES PRONOMS RELATIFS : dont, où, lequel, duquel, auquel, etc.
○ GUIDE DES TEMPS DES VERBES
● TEST DES FORMES DES VERBES
○ L'EMPLOI DES VERBES (propositions subordonnées): futur; conditionnel; subjonctif)
○ VERBES ET PRÉPOSITIONS
○ LA VOIX PASSIVE

Figure 1 GramEx Français screen dump (reproduced with the kind permission of the TELL Consortium (Jo Porritt)

following comments on the software: "GramEx does encourage people to explore different grammatical items", "It can be quite difficult in parts", "It should be very useful for consolidation and revision purposes";

- *Télé-Textes and TT Author 2*: is, in my view, currently one of the best multimedia self-access CD-ROM based language learning packages for advanced level students of French. It is highly interactive and the CD-ROM version is intended by the authors to complement the original videocassette and workbook *Télé-Textes* courseware materials. Having used both versions in different teaching situations, this author found that the software very often surpasses the video and book media, due primarily to the flexibility and ease of use of the combined media within the software. The content and exercise materials include eighteen varied and short video news clips from TF1, and display a fair range of contemporary and cultural subjects. These clips are to be found within various themed *Dossiers*. Each *Dossier* has at least two video clips and a number of exercises and tasks specifically written for use with the chosen subject and are geared towards deepening the user's understanding of the material and confidence in using the language on an independent basis, as can be seen from the screen dump in Figure 2. However, the tasks represent only a small part of the true interactivity of *Télé-Textes*. Designed for individual or small-group learning, the *Télé-Textes* workspace also offers excellent control over the video clip with optional transcripts, a user notepad and a Studio facility for voice recording and multimedia role-playing with the learner in the guise of a television journalist. *TT Author 2* allows the tutor or teacher to build their own specific sets of exercises and tasks and is designed for use with the original *Télé-Textes* video clips. Updates of video clips and other materials are also available from the designers' website.[9]



PREPAREZ-VOUS!

Avant de voir le reportage, repondez aux questions suivantes

1 Que signifie le mot «siderurgie»?

2 Dans quelles regions françaises trouve-t-on les industries siderurgiques?

3 A votre avis, ces industries sont-elles en expansion ou en declin?

Cliquez sur VIDEO 1 pour voir l'introduction du reportage. Puis selectionnez 2 L'ESSENTIEL

Figure 2 Télé=Textes screen dump (reproduced with the kind permission of Wildstrawberry (Andy McKeown)

OTHER SOURCES: ENTER THE WEB

The World Wide Web is by far the largest, most extensive, most contemporary and, at times, the most frustrating resource of all. Through the Web, students and teachers can gain access to on-line discussion groups, e-mail facilities and over 25 million multi-lingual and fortunately, monolingual Web pages. France has been slow off the mark in adopting Web technology because of the continued popularity of Minitel (unlike Germany[10]) but they are catching up fast and even creating ways of combining these two communications technologies[11]. NCET has produced a very useful guide and introduction to the Web for tutors and students, showing how users can, amongst other things:

- work in the target language with authentic, contemporary materials;
- establish curriculum links;
- access expertise outside the school;
- increase motivation by working in real contexts;
- discuss ideas and give opinions;

In addition they also mention what this author considers as a very good use of the Web:

- publishing materials for an audience[12].

After signing up to a Web service provider and using the latest and very good Web search engines and authoring tools, students (and tutors) will soon be able to: "... demonstrate knowledge of contemporary culture and society from a study of two topic areas"[13]. This is not such an onerous and labour-intensive process as it might first seem. Many schools are already linked up to the Internet and have access to the Web, so after some consultation with the school's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) adviser/teacher, the modern languages teacher would be able to find out how much 'space' that their department has been allocated for Web publishing. By 'space', I mean actual megabytes hard disk space that a school's service and Web access provider will offer to the school client. The school's Web pages can be placed on the hard disk of the provider's server and thus can be accessed by anyone with a Web browser, provided they know the address of the website. Some providers offer a fixed amount of free space (around 10 Megabytes) and once this is used up, the client has to buy additional space. Once determined, tutors may follow these steps to publishing their first Web pages:

1. Obtain a copy of a Web browser and editor from the ICT teacher or from a PC magazine or they can be downloaded from a Web software company's Website. The current best software is either Netscape's Communicator or Microsoft's Internet Explorer 4.0 (IE 4). Both are free and both offer virtually the same functions. For example, IE 4 contains, amongst many features, an e-mail and newsgroup reader, a Web editor and a Favourites function for regularly checking subscribed pages[14];
2. Get on-line and browse;
3. Use a Web search engine, such as 'Altavista'[15], to obtain desired information;
4. Refine the search, since typically, 60 thousand Website 'hits' would be too many to go through;
5. Save the desired Web pages for later use (e.g. the sites for *Le Monde* or *Libération*) or simply print them off when they have been downloaded;
6. Design, write and 'publish' some Web pages with students and realize how much of a motivating tool it is;
7. Publicise the Website address for pedagogic, contact, informative as well as (slightly) vainglorious purposes and even enter the Website in competitions[16];
8. Evaluate critically your and your students' experience;
9. Redesign and use the materials again with students in the following school year.

Before fully embracing the Web and using valuable school resources such as teacher time and telephone line(s), there are some important considerations that should be kept in mind. The Web can become quite frustrating when one is attempting to download data from a particularly popular Website or during a period of high activity on the Web (usually in the afternoon), as the time delay can be quite long. There are obvious solutions to this 'temporary' problem such as storing pre-loaded Web sites on local computers and then using them in a classroom for, say, project or consolidation work.

There are many Web sites devoted to practising and testing the four intralingual skills as well as grammar and vocabulary skills. The greatness of the Web comes from its extensive use of hypertext links, which means that highlighted text or images on a Web page can be linked and therefore allow access to other Web pages anywhere in the world. Access is gained through selecting a hypertext link. In giving one single Web address here to a Website that concentrates on writing in French, visitors will soon discover links to other sites that test learners' listening and speaking skills (through multicasting in real-time audio and video) and reading and writing skills (through discussion lists, newsgroups, Internet Relay Chat, and sophisticated MOOs). A 'MOO' is a multi-user dungeon (or virtual place) where users can construct their own virtual characters and worlds and invite other users to join them for discussions. Or users can join already constructed MOOs and participate in on-going discussions.

The following Web site is offered as a possible starting point for a launch onto the Web, it is by no means the only one (NCET, as mentioned before, has a good introductory site to the Web and the University of Newcastle French Site holds an excellent list of pertinent Website addresses as does our own Language Centre[17]), but it will give an immediate taste of what is typical on educational Websites, the address is this: *http://globegate.utm.edu/french/globegate_mirror/writing.html.*

CONCLUSION

Apart from a few dedicated and praiseworthy software packages, there remains a distinct lack of relevant CALL materials for A-level use. The inhibitive costs of many general CD-ROM databases will be encountered for some time yet and may continue to be the reserve of the more financially better-off schools and colleges. However, prices will drop and the growing importance and use of the Web may cause these prices to decrease faster. The Web offers many opportunities to tutors and students as a motivational tool and an invaluable source, but it too does not come free of cost or commitment.

This commitment must come primarily from teachers, who themselves must be helped and taught how to evaluate and integrate this massive resource effectively. The issue of proper integration is an important one here, both for Web and general CALL software use and there is much research still to be done in this area for developing good practice *on a departmental scale*. Before attempting to go beyond the chalkface and into the virtual classroom, modern foreign language departments should consider the following quotation from the recommendations of a report on the Web and its contribution to foreign language learning:

> "Teachers need to work more closely with students in the computer laboratory or self-access

centre, observing and supporting their activity, providing training, raising their awareness of strategic learning processes, and enabling them to become autonomous, competent and confident learners. To get them working efficiently, teachers need to provide more structured starting points on their local Web interface, such as lists of Web addresses organised into language or content-focused categories, or hints for refining searches. And they need to integrate the use of the Web more closely with taught courses and with the learning purposes of their students".[18]

APPENDIX

The Camsoft Catalogue, for example, is available from Camsoft UK, 10 Wheatfield Close Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3PS.

The NCET website can be found at: http://www.ncet.org.uk/. And also by snail mail: Milburn Hill Road, Science Park, Coventry, CV4, 7JJ. Tel.: 01203 416994

The *Oxford Superlex Electronic Dictionary* is available from the OUP at approximately £30.00. One caveat, users should not attempt to use the dictionary within the Word 6 word processing package as this invariably leads to a computer crash. This serious bug, to this author's knowledge, has not yet been remedied by the developers.

Le Robert électronique can be ordered from Chadwyck-Healey Ltd, Cambridge Place, Cambridge, CB2 1NR, for around £700.00. A network licence will be slightly more expensive.

Le Monde sur CD-ROM is available from Research Publications International, PO Box 45, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 8HF.

L'Histoire au jour le jour is available from Multi Lingua, Pinewood, 3a Coombe Ridings, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 7TJ.

Atlas de France is available from Chadwyck-Healey Ltd, Cambridge Place, Cambridge, CB2 1NR.

De Gaulle, un Géant dans l'histoire is produced and available from Infogrames, who can be contacted via their Website: http://www.infogrames/francais/index.html/.

Courrier is available from AVP Computing, School Hill Centre, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 5PH.

Fun with Texts is also available from Camsoft UK, 10 Wheatfield Close Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3PS.

Bonaccord can be purchased from Wida Software Ltd, 2 Nicholas Gardens, London, W5 5HY.

All of the TELL materials may be purchased either from the TELL Consortium, CTI Centre, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull HU6 7RX or from Hodder and Stoughton Educational, 338 Euston Road, London, NW1 3BH.

Télé-Textes and *TT Author 2* is available either from the OUP, or direct from the designers: Wild Strawberry Interactive Multimedia Limited, PO Box 193, Shrewsbury, SY3 7WJ, UK.

NOTES

1 This conclusion is based on returned evaluation questionnaires from students using the CALL facilities at Warwick University Language Centre.

2 The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 'GCE Advanced Subsidiary Examinations Subject Cores for Modern Foreign Languages", Section 2.1, page 2, 18 April 1997, available from SCAA, Newcombe House, 45 Nottinghill Gate, London, W11 3JB.

3 See page 5 of the introduction to the AS and A Level Subject Core for Modern Foreign Languages (1995), available from the Associated Examining Board, Publications Department, Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XJ.

4 M.-N. Guillot's review can be found in *ReCALL*, Vol 6 No 1, May 1994, pp. 7–8.

5 Review in *Info-PC*, Juillet-Août, 1997, p. 167.

6 A full listing of the assessment objectives can be obtained from the University of Cambridge, Local Examinations Syndicate, Syndicate Buildings, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU.

7 *Ibid.*, Assessment Objective no. 4, p. 7.

8 *GramDef* deals solely with grammar definitions in the target language and would be daunting for all but the very best A-level students who, by definition, would not need to use it. This is why readers will have seen only *GramEx* advertised in *TES Computers Update*, June 27th, 1997 for 'intermediate learners' and not *GramDef* as well.

9 For a more detailed discussion of this software, readers can also see this author's review of the CD-ROM in *ReCALL*, Vol 9 No 1, May 1997, pp.58–61. The Wild Strawberry website can be found at this address: http://www.wildstrawberry.com/.

10 For more details, see P. Gubbins' article: 'The Infobahn as teaching resource", in *German Teaching*, No. 12, December 1995, pp.19–22.

11 See the recent article in *Le Monde Informatique*, 20/9/97, pages 1, 24 et suivantes.

12 Contact NCET through the addresses given in the Appendix above, or go straight to this page on their website: http://www.ncet.org.uk/publications/highways/ch2/mfl.html.

13 *Op.cit.* the AEB's assessment objectives, no. 6, p. 6.

14 For a review of IE 4, see *Byte*, June 1997, p. 41, where it received a rare 5 star rating.

15 Altavista is but one of many search engines and can be found here: http://altavista.digital.com/. If this engine becomes slow in providing Websites then simply try another, for example for Francophone *moteurs de recherche*, try any of the following:
http://www.union-fin.fr/recherche/MRT.html/;
http://www.uquebec.cal~Royj/anl/moteur2.html/;
http://www.beaucoup.com/engfren.html/.

16 For example, visit the following Website to see the winning entries in the 'Going to School on the Internet Competition": http://www.rmplc.co.uk/eduweb/sites/cwallis/. See also *The Education Guardian*, 1/7/97, p. 5, for further details.

17 The University of Newcastle French links Website can be found here: http://www.dcl.ac.uk/~nsml/links/french.htm/. Warwick University foreign links pages can be found here: http://www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/Lang_C/lang-links/web-res.htm/.

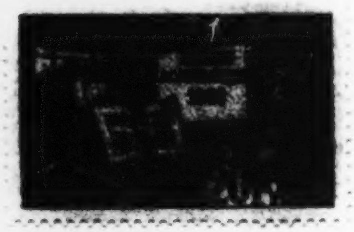
18 Report of the Support Initiative for Multimedia Applications group, chapter 6, 'Conclusions and Recommendations", a copy of which can be found on the Website: http://www.man.ac.uk/MVC/SIMA/foreign/conc.htm.

Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 33–35

News and Notes

Congratulations

The French Section of ALL wishes to offer all our Congratulations to Do Coyle of the School of Education at Nottingham University and former Chair of the ALL French Committee and to Barry Jones of Homerton College. Both these long-serving members have recently learnt that they have been awarded the French decoration of *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques*, often known as *La Légion violette* from the distinguishing colour of the ribbon on the medal. The award is the second oldest in France, having been founded by Napoléon Bonaparte in 1808, only shortly after he had founded La Légion d'Honneur. The award traditionally goes to artists, scientists and distinguished writers as well as to teachers. All members familiar with the work and contribution of Do Coyle and Barry Jones will appreciate why they have been nominated. In 1958 the French PTT issued a special stamp to commemorate the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the award.



A special association exists for people nominated to the Order – AMOPA – Association des Membres de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques. It has branches throughout the world, including one in the UK. A quarterly journal is published, *Revue de l'AMOPA*. Any reader who wants more detailed information about the *Palmes Académiques* will find the book by Emile Foëx *Histoire des Palmes Académiques* extremely useful.

Language Refresher Course, Toulon, May–June 1997

As usual the course, organised by John Fergusson, Deputy Director of ALL, was run in collaboration with Campus International at the University of Toulon. The orientation of the course was changed from previous years in that it concentrated more on language refreshment through focussing on various aspects of contemporary French life, with particular reference to the Provence setting. There were in addition language consolidation classes for those who were in the process of taking over responsibility for teaching French in addition to another foreign language.

The course was generally enthusiastically received by the *congressistes*. One said "The course was enormously stimulating and fully met my expectations". And a comment from another was "A well planned week of activities. Better than expected as it was relevant to individual demands. A dream come true".

The course will be repeated in 1998 – 21 May to 3 June inclusive. There will be differences to accommodate participants' requests. Please enquire for details at the ALL Office in Rugby. Early enquiry is advised if you are anxious to get Lingua funding.

Appointment of Editor for 'Francophonie'

The present Editor's term of duty comes to an end after the September issue of 1998 (Issue No.17). Applications for the Editorship are invited. Editors are appointed for a three year term of office and may be reappointed for a further three years. Applicants are requested to submit a CV and a covering letter outlining their ideas for the journal. Interview/discussion will take place prior to appointment.

The role of the Editor is honorary but expenses, including secretarial, are reimbursed. In addition the Editor is invited to attend *Language World* Conference and in-service days free of charge if expenses cannot be met from other sources. Further details, including job specification, are available from the Rugby Office.

Philately

A new publication *Le Patrimoine de la poste (Editions Flohic)* has recently come out. (ISBN 2-84234-008-6). Described as "une épopée industrielle et humaine à découvrir en 480 pages illustrées par 1800 photographies en couleur" it is offered at the special introductory price of 190FF instead of 270FF to subscribers to the *Service Philatélique de la Poste*. Commenting on it *Le Monde* said "Ce remarquable volume dont l'acquisition ne peut qu'être recommandée se consulte comme une encyclopédie". It is in fact a superb social history of France dating from medieval times and covering the introduction of the first stamps in 1848 up to the present day. A very interesting work to browse through.

Philinfo

We have previously referred to the very attractive series *Philinfo* put out on a monthly basis at 10FF per issue. Colourful, detailed, each issue gives a wealth of information on French life and institutions as celebrated in the stamps of France. The issue for October covers 1997 – Année du Japon, Championnat du Monde de Judo 1997, La Poste aérienne, La Protection de l'enfance maltraitée etc. Full details of this monthly publication are available from La Poste, SNTP, 111 bd Brune, B.P. 129, 75663 Paris Cedex 14.

Atlas de la France

A cheap and bang up-to-date Atlas of France is now available at 42F75. It is published by Editions Ouest-France and in its 40 odd pages it offers very clearly printed maps of France – physical, administrative, climate, demography and transport. These are then followed by a series of regional maps. Readers should note that this is not a road atlas but is an excellent summary of France physical and economic for any students involved in project work. (ISBN 2.7373.2319.3).

Yorkshire-Lille Exchanges 1998

These home-to-home exchanges which began in 1947 still continue to be run very successfully by the Yorkshire Branch of ALL. Applications to take part are encouraged from a very wide area (not exclusively Yorkshire) and applicants, supported by their schools, are matched with people of their own age somewhere in the *Académie de Lille*, which covers anywhere from Dunkerque in the North to Cambrai and St Quentin at the Southern end. Transport is by coach from an arranged point to Lille where French families meet their guests. The cost in 1998 will be approximately £150 (final price to be announced in January). The cost covers travel and all insurances and provides for escorted travel and Resident Escorts at the centre.

Last year there were more than 100 applicants on the French side for whom it was not possible to find a partner. It is expected that a similar demand will be made this year. Any teacher who has pupils aged 14 upwards who might benefit from a home-to-home exchange is urged to consider this scheme. Schools in County Durham, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire and Nottinghamshire could easily be accommodated. If you would like further details for the 1998 Exchange please telephone the Organising Secretary, Denise Driscoll at the Centre for Language Study, Leeds Metropolitan University on 0113 283 7441 or send a fax addressed to Denise Driscoll at 0113 274 5966. Anyone interested should be in touch for preliminary discussion by February or March at the latest.

The dates for the French Exchange are as follows: French pupils arrive on Sunday 19 July, French and English travel together to France on Sunday 2 August, English pupils return on Sunday 16 August.

Teachers wanting brief information on the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region for pupils will find in the series A la Découverte des plus belles routes *Nord Pas-de-Calais Picardie*, published by Minerva, ISBN 2-8307-0360-X.

The ALL Yorkshire Branch also runs a similar Exchange Scheme for students of German. English students will go to Westphalia on Saturday, 4 April (and stay for a fortnight). Their German partners then come to England on Thursday, 23 July for their 14 day stay. Any reader interested in involving the school in this Exchange is again advised to contact the Organising Secretary as soon as possible. Telephone number, etc. as above. Here too there were more German applicants than we could match up last year. The cost is still approximate but will be in the region of £160 for escorted travel, insurance etc.

ALL French Day 15 November 1997

French Day 1997 which takes place at the Lycée Charles de Gaulle in South Kensington offers a varied and interesting day's programme. Unfortunately it takes place too late to be reported on in this issue but we hope to offer readers a full report in the March issue. The programme covers a variety of activities including several computer choices – *France @ la carte* and *Using the Internet*. These are followed by workshops in the afternoon, exploiting the material discussed in the morning sessions. The ALL French Committee records its grateful thanks for all the support received from Monsieur Brusa, Proviseur du Lyc<\i>e Charles de Gaulle and from staff of the BCLE, London.

Mise en valeur du Québec à travers le monde

http://www.total.net/@quebec-monde

Québec dans le monde dispose depuis peu de son propre site Internet. Nous vous invitons à vebir le consulter. Sur la page d'accueil, on trouve les rubriques suivantes: association, répertoires/bottins, listes informatisées, inscription aux bottins, périodiques, fondation.

Québec dans le monde publie 13 répertoires, 3 bottins et 3 périodiques et gère 25 listes informatisées sur le Québec. Ces divers produits de référence et de consultation one été conçus dans le but de fournir des jalons, des points de repère, à tous ceux qui désirent se renseigner sur le Québec et ses multiples ressources ou entrer en contact avec les Québécois et leurs institutions. Ils devraient être appréciés non seulement des Québécois mais aussi des amis du Québec dans le monde qui désirent développer et maintenir des liens plus étroits avec nous.

Ce site vise à mettre le Québec en valeur dans le monde. D'autres projets viendront bientôt se greffer à cette initiative. C'est pourquoi, nous vous invitons à consulter cette nouvelle vitrine québécoise mais aussi à la porter à la connaissance de vos collègues, amis, partenaires, lecteurs et usagers.

Quel avenir pour la FIPF?

L'année 1995 aura été une année particulièrement fertile pour la FIPF.

Plusieurs grandes réunions ont été organisées: celle de l'APFA, à Abidjan, qui a permis aux associations africaines de se concerter sur l'avenir du français en Afrique; la reunion de Beyrouth, qui a vu la naissance de la Commission pour le monde arabe; celle de Cluj, qui aura permis aux associations d'Europe centrale et orientale de faire le point sur les problemes de formation; la rencontre des membres de la CEO enfin à Luxembourg pour mettre un point final à l'étude sur les examens de français en fin de secondaire.

Par ailleurs, nos grands dossiers sont en bonne voie: enseignements bilingues, que pilote André Obadia; évaluation, sous la responsabilité de la CEO; la formation initiale et continue, confiée à la CECO, et depuis peu de temps, une réflexion sur les politiques linguistiques que le président de l'AATF, a accepté de prendre en charge.

La collection «Si on chantait» est, elle aussi, lancée et la première version de «Parlons français» (qui sera coréenne) est «sur les rails», avec la bénédiction de l'Harmattan. Quant à la coopération avec les medias, elle se concrétise à chaque numero de l'Univers, avec à chaque fois de nouvelles initiatives.

Et – signe incontestable de vitalité – en 1995 plusieurs associations ont rejoint les rangs de la FIPF: Hong Kong, Israël, les Seychelles, les Amis de la France en Russie. D'autres s'apprêtent à le faire.

Enfin, le prochain congrès mondial, grâce au travail de chacun, et en particulier des comittés japonais, grâce aussi au soutien des différents ministères, s'annonce sous de très bons auspices.

Au cours de ce congrès justement, il conviendra de réfléchir avec les associations de professeurs de français aux moyens d'améliorer encore les modalités de fonctionnement de la FIPF: mieux connaître leurs attentes, mieux répondre a leurs demandes, savoir quel avenir elles souhaitent pour notre fédération, ce sera le but des forums régionaux auxquels elles sont toutes conviées.

Et il appartiendra au futur président de les écouter, de les aider à mener à bien les actions qu'elles auront choisies, et de donner au secrétariat général les moyens nécessaires pour maintenir les liens qu'il s'applique à nouer entre les professeurs de français du monde entier.

Je compte bien être là pour le soutenir, avec une conviction et un enthousiasme que deux ans de travail quotidien et d'inévitables difficultés n'auront pas entamés, et pour mener, avec le nouveau bureau, une action dynamique, efficace... et joyeuse!

ANNIE MONNERIE-GOARIN
Secrétaire générale de la FIPF

Cité des Sciences, Paris

À partir de septembre 97, la Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie enrichira ses expositions permanentes d'une nouvelle exposition sur les biotechnologies végétales. La Grande Serre sera tout à la fois:

- un jardin: une serre de 400 m^2 qui abrite fruits, fleurs, légumes et plantes ornementales issus de l'agriculture hors-sol et sous verre;
- une œuvre d'architecte: cette serre est un projet expérimental, techniquement complexe, «une sorte de laboratoire» mis en scene par Dominique Perrault, architecte et scénographe;
- une présentation des enjeux liés aux biotechnologies végétales: avec La Grande Serre, la Cité des Sciences propose aux visiteurs des réponses aux questions qu'ils se posent sur l'usage des biotechnologies dans les domaines de la santé et de l'environnement;
- un lieu de rencontre entre artistes et scientifiques.

Des visites guidées, des conférences et des animations accompagneront l'ouverture de la grande serre.

Réservation/visite des classes: Billet d'entree : 25 F par élève.

Par courrier: Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie.

Réservation cité-géode-cinaxe – 75930 Paris Cédex 19
Par téléphone: (33-1) 40 05 12 12
Par télécopie: (33-1) 40 05 81 9

«Allons en France 98»

For the 1998 Football World Cup, the French Embassy and CILT are launching a competition on the website *France @ la carte*. The competition is open to British students aged 16–19, studying French at a school or college in the UK. Competition winners could be off to see the World Cup in France next year!

Students should submit a project, based on an imaginary diary, which provides them with an opportunity to demonstrate not only their French but also their creativity.

Imagine you are travelling in France in the summer of 1998. You are staying for a couple of weeks in one of the French towns hosting the World Cup matches, and a local paper asks you to keep a diary of your stay: a young Briton's impression of the town at this particular time (region, culture, tourism, gastronomy, social and sporting events, etc.). This written project should be accompanied by a short audio cassette recording (approx. 3 minutes) where you give an interview to a local radio reporter (role played by your teacher or language assistant).

Entries must be written in French, must be accompanied by a competition cover sheet, and should be submitted by February 20th 1998 at latest. Selected candidates will be interviewed in March and the prize-giving ceremony will be held at the French Embassy in London in April.

To obtain a competition cover sheet, and to find out entry details and other requirements, either connect to *France @ la carte*, or write to Ambassade de France, concours "Allons en France 98", 28 Cromwell Road, London SW7 2EL.

Books and materials received

The following books and materials are a selection of those that have been received from the publishers. Titles marked * are available for review by telephoning 0113 267 9258, after 6 pm.

***FRANCOTHÈQUE, A RESOURCE FOR FRENCH STUDIES**
Edited by Gareth Thomas
Hodder and Stoughton. 1997. ISBN 0 340 67966 2. £14.99
A comprehensive overview of France and the Francophone world for students at advanced levels, using authentic press materials, historical documents, photographs, etc.

*** UN DEUX TROIS**
Bryan Goodman-Stephens and Bernard Kavanagh
Longman. 1997.
Year 1. Student's Book: ISBN 0 582 29437 1. £7.99.
Teacher's Book: ISBN 0 582 29921 7. £19.99.
Activity Book: ISBN 0 582 19929 2. £1.00
Also available for Year 1, but not sent for review, are audio cassettes and activity book cassettes. A new wide ability course for 11–14 year-olds.

***PASSE PARTOUT**
Daphne Philpot and Judy Somerville
Nelson. 1997.
Stage 1
Student's Book: ISBN 017 440065 9. £7.99.
Teacher's Book: ISBN 017 440066 7. £19.99.
Copymasters: ISBN 017 440067 5. £52.50.
Cassettes: ISBN 017 440069 1. £52.50.
Stage 2
Student's Book: ISBN 017 440070 5. £7.99.
Teacher's Book: ISBN 017 440071 3. £19.99.
Copymasters: ISBN 017 440072 1. £52.50.
Cassettes: ISBN 017 440074 B. £52.50.
A new four stage French course, offering full coverage of the National Curriculum and Scottish 5–14 Guidelines and preparing students for GCSE, Standard Grade and Leaving Certificate (Ordinary Level).

***FRANCE TODAY**
Edited by J. E. Flower
Hodder and Stoughton. 1997. ISBN 0 340 63093 0. £16.99
First published in 1971, the eighth edition has been fully updated and contains a variety of new illustrations, photographs and authentic material.

***LE FRANÇAIS DANS LE MONDE**
La revue internationale des professeurs de français. Numéro 291, août–septembre. Musique, multimédia, pédagogie, etc.

***FRENCH WRITING ACTIVITIES FOR KEY STAGE 4**
Edited by Ann Swarbrick
ALL. 1997. ISBN 0 903846 1. £30.00 + £2 p&p from ALL
Sixty photocopiable pages for KS4. The pack is divided into five sections corresponding to the five areas of experience and there are twelve sheets in each section.

***DIAGONALES**
La revue de la Francophonie linguistique culturelle et éducative. Août 1997. 50FF + cassette. Vietnam: la relance du français, Enseigner le français langue seconde, etc.

***FRANCE DIRECTE**
Edited by Simon Thorp
Carel. 1997. ISBN 1 872365 39 6. £17.50
Authentic and up-to-date material in French, fully photocopiable, for GCSE and Standard Grade.

***FRENCH LANGUAGE SKILL SUPPORT FOR KEY STAGE 3**
Britta Eises, Susan de Muth and Alisa Abbott. Illustrated by Craig Dixon and Simon Downes
The Chalkface Project. March 1997. Prices not given.
Writing: ISBN 1 86025 106 4
Speaking: ISBN 1 86025 104 8
Reading: ISBN 1 86025 105 6
Listening: ISBN 1 86025 103 X + cassette
A series of interactive and interrelated resource materials to develop understanding and confidence in the use of the French language. Photocopiable within the purchasing institution.

***FRENCH READING ACTIVITIES FOR KEY STAGE 3/S1–2**
Sue Finnie
ALL. March 1997. From the ALL Classroom Resources Series edited by Ann Swarbrick. ISBN 0 903846 314. £30.00
Differentiated texts and tasks for NC levels 1–5. Photocopiable within the purchasing institution. Available from ALL, 10% discount for members, add £2 for p&p.

***AVANTAGE 3. NEW EDITION VERT**
Rosi McNab
Heinemann. August 1997. (New edition Rouge to follow in 1997.) Pupil's book: ISBN 435 37517 2. £8.25. Other components available but not sent for review.

Francophonie, December 1997, No 16, 37–40

Reviews

Francophone Literatures. An Introductory Survey

Belinda Jack

Oxford University Press, 1996, ISBN 0 19 871507 2 (hbk), 0 19 871506 4 (pbk).

France's colonial past has, like Britain's, created a cultural imbalance and eroded our very appreciation of literary excellence. In many ways the canon emanating from the 'motherland' still retains its hallmark.

Efforts have been made. The *Prix littéraires* now attempt to bridge this cultural gap. Universities (e.g. Paris XIII) have a *Centre d'études Francophones*, attempting to resist cultural hegemony. Few, however, are the writers who have achieved a bi-cultural allegiance: Leopold Senghor, the great Senegalese poet, is also an *Agrégé de Grammaire*.

Colleagues will welcome this book that acknowledges the existence of literatures too long kept in the shadow of French literature, not only by France but also by English speaking academics, one recently referring to the Creole language as 'pidgin French'. Attempting to unite the spheres of Modern Languages and of Multicultural Studies, Dr Jack's study is a breath of fresh air in our pigeon-holed existence.

Of particular interest is the relationship between a literature and its parent culture, its cultural distinctness, emergent literatures presented against the background of France's colonial history, the birth of a Creole literary identity (from exoticism to idiosyncrasy), the celebration of 'Antillanite', Belgian literature emerging from patriotic poetry and historical drama and its bipolar linguistic identity leading her to veto the proposed adoption of French as the sole language of the 'Common Market', a little acknowledged historical fact.

A wide ranging yet puzzling fresco: it classifies literatures by cultural/racial groupings rather than geographical criteria, and it acknowledges that multiculturalism is rooted in respect for other cultures. Yet it takes a firmly Anglocentric view of the French approach, not just when it ignored the cultures of its former colonies, but even when it studies and promotes them, because it does not fit into the British mould.

Methodology seems a problem: the study does not enable the reader to distinguish between works emerging from particular cultures and studies on these. It refers to most, even major works without indicating date or even publisher. Finally, its bibliography (17 entries) misses Césaire, de Chazal, Condé, Ben Jelloun, Glissant, Senghor, to name but a few. A fascinating survey yet disappointing scholarship.

MICHELLE PEPRATX-EVANS
University of Leeds

Eurolab Edition Française

Emmanuel Corrado and Laurence Blanchard. Compiled by Oliver Gray

Revilo Language Cards, 1997, ISBN 1 897609 21 3, £75.00

This new pack of materials from Revilo is designed to give KS4 listening practice for the new style GCSE examinations and is very welcome. It consists of 25 cassettes and their accompanying cards. On one side of the card the tasks are at basic level and on the other side the tasks are more challenging, for pupils aiming to achieve the higher grades. This approach allows access to the same recorded material at either level by providing differentiated tasks. Activities at basic level include *vrai/faux*, gap filling, picture matching and word selection. The more challenging activities include gap filling, questions, matching parts of sentences and definitions.

A glossary is provided on the student record card, there are clearly set out answer sheets for self marking and there is a transcript booklet. The accompanying cards can be duplicated and so *Eurolab* can be used either as an independent listening library or for whole class use. This is a very versatile resource. We have long been a fan of Revilo Language Cards' products and are delighted to incorporate this pack into our work.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Perspectives Françaises

Anne Topping

AVP Multimedia, 1996, COM3001-5, £69.

Minimum requirements: PC or PC compatible computer, 386 or higher processor, 4MB RAM, 2MB available hard disk space, CD ROM drive (double speed or higher), audio board and VGA with at least 256 colour display. MS Windows 3.1 or higher. Mouse or compatible pointing device. Headphones or speakers. Also available in MAC version.

Having used many CD ROMs, I was really excited to use this new product which makes excellent use of this medium's potential. After installing the necessary elements of the disk onto the hard drive, *Perspectives Françaises* talks you through how to use all the facilities on the disk. The commentary is fairly fast, but can be paused and repeated as necessary, ideal for technophobes, students with reading difficulties or those of us who don't have the time to learn through trial and error. On opening the program, the 'description panel' and 'user notepad' both contain text explaining their function.

Activities possible include copying, translating, cloze activities, listening and repeating, as well as giving users access to a wider range of French voices than otherwise possible in the classroom. The pictures, which are the focus of the activities, are clear, and can be zoomed in on as well as printed. Students will get a real sense of French culture from the pictures included, everything looks so... French! Topics can be searched visually, using a rolling display or the pictures with a commentary, or by keyword or topic. A dictionary is included, so that students can complete all activities at the computer without having to fiddle about with other resources. They can choose a 'password' to use with the 'user notepad', to save and print work from there. The disk is suitable for Key Stages 3 and 4.

Whether you have been let down by inadequate CD ROM resources in the past, or are still wary of this type of resource, *Perspectives Françaises* should be enough to redress the balance.

SARAH FITCH
The John Ellis Community College, Leicester

InfoFrance

Graham Bishop

John Murray, 1996, ISBN 0 7195 8500 7, £29. 99

This resource provides photocopiable reading material in an A4 loose-leaf format, suitable for the new GCSEs and the early stages of A level teaching. The topical but 'durable' texts are in newspaper format; all, in fact, are taken from the French newspaper *Infomatin*. Five main areas provide the framework for the organisation of the texts: *Santé et loisirs, Le sport, L'environnement, Le monde du travail* and *La société*, and few texts are without intrinsic interest or appeal to young adults.

Each text is followed by three pages – usually comprising six tasks – of questions and tasks that exploit the material in the text. Single starred tasks are simplest in that they provide target language exploitation of the vocabulary of the text by inviting the students to match words or phrases, or find the French equivalent of English words, while tasks with two stars allow the students to develop their ability to comprehend the gist of a passage and to practise skim-reading by filling gaps and answering true/false, retranslation and comprehension questions. Answers are provided for one and two star activities at the end of the file; three star tasks are more open-ended, consisting principally of speaking and writing tasks, including role-play and letter-writing. The tasks are very similar, in fact, to those that will begin to appear in GCSE exams, although perhaps with more emphasis on language manipulation than is to be found in exam tasks – no bad thing, as the student is encouraged to use language awareness to understand the meaning of text. As such, the resource is largely suitable as exam practice for Higher tier candidates.

This *dossier* also includes a short but useful information section for students on how they can develop their reading skills, and a more substantial 12 page section on how to use a dictionary that combines information and a task-based approach to practising the skill. Each of the five main sections of the resource contains five to six texts – 27 texts in total – which equates to approximately £1 per text. With full photocopy rights and a choice of ready-made exercises, this is an attractive proposition.

In a sense, this is a unique resource because of the age range that it appears to cater for – 14 to 19. The texts, however, are not graded according to a wide range of ability, but rather aimed at a single band: intermediate learners of French, namely students from the Higher tier at GCSE to low attainers at A level. This works to its advantage: if the texts in this resource were graded or differentiated to the extent that this age range seems to suggest, the resource would represent much poorer value for money, providing as it would only a handful of texts per level, or only a limited range of tasks for each text that were suitable for each level. As it is, the resource certainly has value for use early in an A level course, although its greatest value lies in its potential as teaching material to prepare students for the GCSE Higher Tier and to provide them with a strong link to post-16 A level work – a welcome addition to the market.

HELEN WRIGHT
St. Edward's School, Oxford

Confort 2

Véronique Bussolin, Jacqueline Jenkins and Barry Jones

Hodder & Stoughton, 1997,
ISBN 0 340 65874 6, £25.00

Confort 2 is a pack of photocopiable worksheets which are designed to be used for homework assignments and for cover lessons in case of teacher absence. There are fourteen modules, each of which have three sheets that are pitched at three differentiated levels. The one star sheets have *Mon petit lexique* to refer to for help, while two and three star sheets would require the use of a dictionary. There is a solutions section for self marking, but those pages are very crowded – I should have preferred the answers to be clear at little more than a glance for effective pupil use.

Confort 2 is directly related to the Spirale National Curriculum course, but since the topics covered are common to other similar courses they can be used in most situations. Areas covered include: illness, appearance, daily routine, spare time, holidays, keeping fit and transport. The worksheets would be very useful as extras for both reinforcment and emergency lesson setting. They may well fill a gap in your department's resource bank.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Effective Language Learning

Suzanne Graham

Multilingual Matters, 1997, ISBN 1 85359 379 6,
£13.95 (paperback)

This book, part of the Multilingual Matters Modern Languages in Practice series, describes recent research carried out into the difficulties faced by A level learners of language (specifically French and German) as they make the transition from GCSE to A level, and the strategies they develop to help them learn language effectively throughout their A level course. By focusing in her research on the problems learners encounter at A level, the author is able to explore a range of language learning strategies used by learners to combat these difficulties, and she draws some pertinent conclusions about how A level students need to be encouraged to reflect on the strategies they employ, and how teachers can ease their students' difficulties through the explicit teaching of learning strategies.

The book is concise and extremely readable, and will be of interest to the A level teacher who struggles to help A level students overcome the mental blocks that they regularly seem to develop. There are case studies of four successful and not so successful individuals, analysing their language learning strategies and drawing conclusions about which strategies work. The book also re-visits and summarises concisely much of the research that has been done since the mid-seventies on how we learn second languages, and this is worth a read. The author tackles the role of the teacher – are we teachers of language or teachers of learning? – and looks, in addition to the cognitive strategies explored, at various affective concerns and issues related to gender.

This is a book for the holidays rather than the middle of a hectic term, and it is for reflection and stimulation rather than immediate implementation in the classroom. It is not, however, removed from the classroom. The author makes a number of concrete solutions, all of which, as she demonstrates, are grounded in the research she has conducted and drawn on. Learning strategies are the key to successful language learning, and she argues strongly for a focus on reflection and learner training from an early stage, for reviewing all A level materials in light of the research, and for strategy training as an on-going process. Her last words warn against complacency: "It is... access to the learning process which educators must provide, rather than merely assuming that all learners will discover it automatically for themselves". It is the answer to the question 'but how do we do this' that this book goes some way to providing.

HELEN WRIGHT
St. Edward's School, Oxford

Relations Anaphoriques et (in)cohérence

Walter de Mulder, Liliane Tasmowski-de Ryck and Carl Vetters (Eds)

Rodopi B.V. Amsterdam. ISBN 90-420-0229-8, 314pp. US$50

I like to come across a book like this from time to time. I stress from time to time. Not frequently. It does me good to realise that a group of fellow human beings can write a book which leaves me feeling not just out of my depth but rather totally engulfed by a tide of sesquipedalian meaninglessness, or as Mr Polly puts it, "sesquippledan verboojuice".

Relations Anaphoriques et (in)cohérence is a symposium to which some 20 high powered linguisticians have contributed a distillation of their thoughts on anaphora, a rhetorical device in which a word or phrase is repeated at the beginning of each successive clause (OED). Larousse defines *une anaphore* as "la répétition d'un mot au début de plusieurs phrases successives pour insister sur une idée, produire un effet de symétrie". So far as I can see the Editors take such elementary definitions as read and consequently offer no such clarification. Instead they leap head first into "*Anaphore pronominale et référents évolutifs ou Comment faire recette avec un pronom*". To the average reader it's a bit of a facer but he/she *is* warned that this is actually the second part of a much bigger work still to be published. You can see why. Some 29 pages are expended on the topic before we enter really deep waters to learn of "*Anaphores pronominales en contexte d'héterogénéité énonciative: effets d'(in)cohérence*". Well the writer should know. They don't come much more incoherent than this, in my view.

By now my spirit was flagging. Nor was it raised by the prospect of further elucidation from the Chapter/Paper entitled "*Anaphores et échelles. Comment les inférences scalaires contribuent à la désambiguïsation référentielle*" in which two more intellectual giants come to grips with the problem. But they didn't help me and so I turned to "*La pragma-sémantique de l'identité*" in the hope of learning something, but I didn't.

I cheated by looking to the end, just as the weaker brethren amongst us do, when tackling an Agatha Christie. Would it tell me who done it? The 64,000 dollar question, posed by Zlatka Guentchéva, made me think it might. "*Le phénomène de redoublement clitique est-il expression d'anaphore?*" But I was disappointed, even more disappointed when I found that the author herself, after 275 pages, was disappointed! (Is this an anaphora, I wonder.) "L'analyse du phénomène présentée ici reste cependant insuffisante; il est indispensable qu'elle soit complétée par une analyse de la construction du point de vue de la décomposition énonciative (au sens praguois du terme)." So there you are. If you are looking for something to fill a few idle hours in the next vacation drop a line to Zlatka Guentchéva. She might be able to fix you up with something.

As I implied at the start, this book made me feel I have been all my working life an intellectual pygmy masquerading as a giant. I suppose there *are* folk around who read this stuff and enjoy it. If I am being terribly unfair and if we do have such people amongst our readers, I will happily send them a copy of this magnum opus *and* pay for them to go to the pictures afterwards, when they have digested it. Provided, of course, that they review it.

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

Fun with French

Lynda Carey

Pentland Press Ltd., 1997, ISBN 1 85821 448 3

This handy little booklet is a compilation of puzzles designed to be fun as well as a learning tool. There are anagrams, crosswords, wordsearches, quizzes, matching and odd man out activities. These are all suited to francophiles with a wide range of language experience, from enthusiastic beginners to advanced students.

The book would be very suitable for adult learners who are seeking something a little different to extend their knowledge of the language and culture of France and the French. It is a great pity that unauthorized duplication contravenes existing laws as there are many activities which would be great for school use.

PAT BERRY
Aireville School, Skipton

Practising French Grammar: A Workbook

Roger Hawkins, Marie-Noëlle Lamy and Richard Towell

Arnold, 1997, 256pp, ISBN 0 340 59830 1, £10.99

Readers of *Francophonie* who regularly consult the reviews pages will perhaps recall the warm welcome which was given to *French Grammar and Usage* by Hawkins and Towell in the December 1996 issue. The review announced "This book is a major contribution to reference works on French grammar." After enthusing in detail about the book the review concluded "*French Grammar and Usage* is a reference book, not a class handbook... There would be room for exercises in a supporting volume".

And now here they are. The old firm of Hawkins and Towell have recruited Marie-Noëlle Lamy to produce *Practising French Grammar, A Workbook*. And that is exactly what it is. At an extraordinarily reasonable price for these days (£10.99 or a pint of beer a night for one week in the student bar) we have 212 pages of grammar exercises plus all the corrections at the end. It is just what the Doctor ordered. Students coming on post A level courses continually tell us "I didn't know that". One of my own incredulous student's amazement was demonstrated in ringing tones as she blurted out "Are you sure?"

This book, as one might expect, is

designed to work with *French Grammar and Usage* and it frequently refers users back to it (see 'FGU' which may give users scope for invention). It would obviously be sensible to use the two in tandem, but it wouldn't be necessary. This new workbook stands well on its own for it includes short and to the point grammatical notes. It is clear in concept and easy to use, entirely jargon-free. The sentences that serve for completion and manipulation are all modern authentic texts taken from the daily or weekly press. This avoids giving the impression that the book is too 'scolaire' for in addition to learning grammar students are unwittingly reinforcing modern vocabulary and idiom from adult contexts and such words and expressions are subsequently picked up and tested at regular intervals through the book.

A further good point is that the authors have totally avoided "the postillion has been struck by lightening" syndrome. It is not just a book for your literary scholars. In these days of cross-faculty and institution-wide language programmes the examples used speak to everybody. It is language for the modern world in context, e.g. page 3 Keywords are 'higher education', 'e-mail', 'at the leading edge', 'aeronautical engineering', 'the after-life', 'the list of best-sellers'.

Exercises are of all kinds – fill in the blanks based on previous reading or grammar revision are perhaps the commonest kind. There are, in addition, translation and retranslation exercises which are always useful with advanced learners, practice with verb forms and tenses, table completion stresses the importance of patterns and the usefulness and reliability of analogy in language learning, a faculty which some students sometimes seem slow to develop though, admittedly, it can lead to disasters. In addition there are open-ended exercises.

Finally it is important to stress that the majority of these exercises could be used orally in class or in the language laboratory. Some of the exercises are actually headed 'Read aloud': and all of them could be so used, thus removing the tedium of many of written exercises.

All the exercises can be seen as self-correcting work and therefore ideal for independent study at home for the student who says "Can you recommend a good book to work through on my own?" Seek no further. This is it. It is flexible. You do not have to plough through it in any particular order. Select according to your students' needs.

The book is plainly aimed at Higher Education, presumably post A level students, but many Sixth Form (Year 13) teachers will recognise the usefulness of a book of this kind for their students just coming up to A level. They will certainly benefit from it.

Without hesitation I would give this book the 'Best Buy' label. At this price it is superb value and, price aside, I know of no other bread'n'butter grammar book that tackles grammar so clearly and so effectively. Uncluttered by jargon and not riddled with exceptions it has a plain message for all advanced learners of French.

One final point. I think the publishers should now put the bulk of these exercises together with the short grammatical examples onto CD-ROM. They would be invaluable in a library/laboratory setting.

ALAN SMALLEY
Leeds Metropolitan University

DIALOGUE 2000

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DIALOGUE 2000

Further information from Louise Kitching,
Central Bureau ✆ 0171-389 4069

The Central Bureau, incorporating the UK Centre for European Education and Education Partners Overseas, forms part of the British Council. It is funded by the Education Departments of the United Kingdom and is the UK National Agency for many of the European Union education and training programmes. The British Council is registered in England as a charity no 209131.

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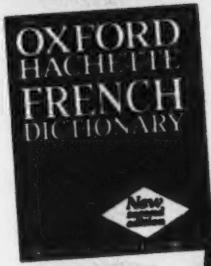

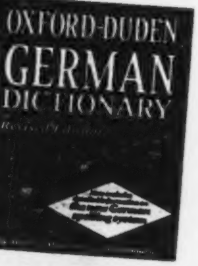

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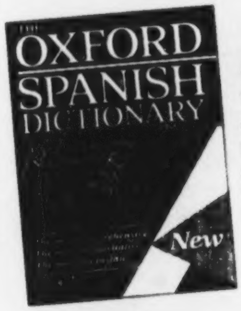

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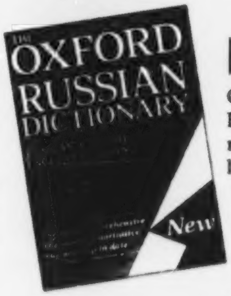

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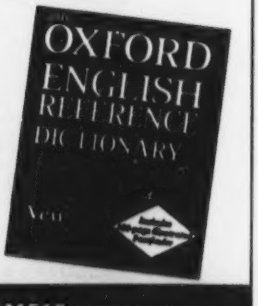

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